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WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. BISHOP HAY

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WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. BISHOP HAY

OF EDINBURGH

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

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EDITED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP STRAIN

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THE

DEVOUT CHRISTIAN

INSTRUCTED IN

THE LAW OF CHRIST, ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Q. 1. WHAT is the second commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord his God in vain," Exod. xx. 7; or, as it is expressed in another text, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for he shall not be unpunished that taketh His name upon a vain thing," Deut. v. 11.

Q. 2. What is the end or design of this commandment?

A. It is to direct us how to worship God in our words, by honouring His holy name.

Q. 3. Is God jealous of the honour due to His holy name?

A. He is most jealous of this honour; as appears

both from the words of the commandment, with the threatened punishment annexed, and also from several other texts of Scripture: "Thou shalt not swear falsely by My name, nor profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord," Lev. xix. 12. "*Profane not* My holy name, that I may be sanctified in the midst of the children of Israel," Lev. xxii. 32. "Holy and terrible is His name," Ps. cx. 9. "Blessed be the name of the Lord, from henceforth now and for ever; from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise," Ps. cxii. 2. "For, from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name," says Almighty God, "is great among the Gentiles," Mal. i. 11. Severe judgments are threatened against those who do not give the due honour to the holy name of God; "If thou wilt not fear His glorious and terrible name, that is, the Lord thy God, the Lord shall increase thy plagues, and the plagues of thy seed; plagues great and lasting; infirmities grievous and perpetual," Deut. xxviii. 58. "They profaned My holy name by the abominations which they committed; for which reason I consumed them in My wrath," Ezec. xliii. 8. From this we see how much we ought to honour and revere the sacred name of God, and how careful we ought to be never to profane it. This is a natural consequence of the first commandment; for if we firmly believe God to be a Being of infinite perfections, power, and majesty, our supreme and sovereign Lord, and if in our hearts we feel that profound veneration and reverential love which His sovereign majesty and perfections justly demand, can we fail to have the most profound respect and dread of His adorable name? When we have a real esteem of any person, whenever we really love and honour him, we never fail to speak of him with respect, and it pains

us to hear anything said by others derogatory to his honour. How much more, then, ought this to be the case with respect to God, Who is worthy of all homage from us His creatures, and whose sacred name is terrible and holy, as He Himself declares, expressly commanding us to sanctify and revere it?

Q. 4. What is the general division of the second commandment?

A. There are four different ways of honouring Almighty God and His holy name by our words, and these form four different classes of duties, into which the second commandment is divided. These are (1.) Praising and blessing God; (2.) Making and keeping lawful vows; (3.) Swearing by His holy name in judgment, in justice, and in truth, when necessity requires it; (4.) Calling upon His holy name to bless ourselves or others. These are the duties enjoined by this commandment; and the vices opposite to each of these are the sins forbidden.

Section I.

Of praising and blessing God and His holy Name.

Q. 5. Is it our duty to bless and praise the holy name of God?

A. It is; and this duty is laid down in numberless places throughout the holy Scriptures. Thus: "Praise the Lord, ye children, praise ye the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord, from henceforth now and for ever: From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise: The Lord is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens," Ps. cxii. 1. "Kings of the

earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, young men and maidens, let the old with the younger praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is exalted," Ps. cxlviii. 11. "Bring to the Lord glory and honour; bring to the Lord glory to His name," Ps. xxviii. 2. "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us extol His name together," Ps. xxxiii. 4. This is what our Saviour commands us to pray for daily, in that petition of the prayer He taught us, *hallowed be Thy name.* The saints of God were assiduous in performing this duty; it was their most delightful employment to thank and bless God at all times, both when He bestowed His favours, and when He was pleased to visit them with crosses and afflictions. Thus David says, "I will sing to the Lord, Who giveth me good things; I will sing to the name of the Lord, the most high," Ps. xii. 6. And Job, in the midst of all his afflictions, blessed God, and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so it is done; blessed be the name of the Lord," Job, i. 31. See above, Chap. IX., Q. 6, No. 3. The manner in which we ought to perform this duty is thus laid down in Scripture: "Therefore with the whole heart and mouth praise ye Him, and bless the name of the Lord," Eccles. xxxix. 41. Now by blessing and praising God and His holy name, is understood whatever we may say in His praise; as confessing Him and His Gospel before men, instructing the ignorant in the knowledge of God and His divine truths, exciting and exhorting others to praise Him, thanking Him for all His benefits, acknowledging Him to be just, wise, powerful, holy, and the like.

Q. 6. Who are those who transgress this duty of praising the holy name of God?

A. (1.) Those who on all occasions have the name of

God, or of Jesus, in their mouths, and who use these adorable names in almost every sentence, as if they were mere words, without sense or meaning. This shows a disrespect for God, and is a great irreverence to His holy name. Were any person to use our name in a similar manner, we would consider ourselves insulted. And can we imagine that Almighty God will not be offended when His venerable name is treated in such a disrespectful manner? It is certainly most displeasing to Him, as it is a direct breach of the express words of His commandments, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," that is, without a just cause, only upon a proper occasion, and in a reverent manner; all which circumstances are wanting in those we here speak of; hence they stand guilty before God, for "He will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain;" and they will certainly be punished sooner or later, for "he shall not go unpunished who taketh His name in vain." This, therefore, is a dangerous custom, and to be speedily corrected, lest those who are guilty of it find, when too late, its fatal effects. "Let not the naming of God be usual in thy mouth, and meddle not with the names of saints, for thou shalt not escape free from them," Ecclus. xxiii. 10. (2.) Those also who are guilty of blasphemy, are guilty of a grievous breach of this duty, of blessing the holy name of God.

Q. 7. What is blasphemy?

A. Blasphemy is speaking evil of God, or of His saints, and may be committed in various ways. (1.) By denying any of the perfections of God, as His justice, mercy, or providence. Of this kind of blasphemy, people are sometimes tempted to be guilty when suffering affliction caused by the cruelty, tyranny, or injustice of others. (2.) By attributing any defect or imperfection to God, as

want of compassion, causing sin, or inability to assist us, and to prevent evil. Thus the children of Israel were guilty. Of this, then, when loathing the manna, "They spoke ill of God, and said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Because He struck the rock, and the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed, can He also give bread, or provide a table for His people? Therefore the Lord heard, and was angry, and a fire was kindled in Jacob, and wrath came up against Israel; . . . as yet the meat was in their mouth, and the wrath of God came upon them: and He slew the fat ones among them, and brought down the chosen men of Israel," Ps. lxxvii. 19, 30. (3.) By speaking with contempt of God, or of Jesus Christ; of their holy names, of the wounds, blood, passion, or death of Christ; by scoffing at or deriding them. In this manner, when our Saviour was hanging on the cross, "They that passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save thyself; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross," Mat xxvii. 39. (4.) By cursing God, or wishing evil to Him; as wishing there were no God, that He did not know our sins, or could not punish them. This is the language of the damned, of whom we are told that "they gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pains and wounds," Apoc. xvi. 10. (5.) By saying that God is guilty of any sin, as of injustice, lust, or the like. Thus the Jews blasphemed our Saviour, calling Him a drunkard, a glutton, a wizard, &c. (6.) To speak in any injurious manner of the blessed Virgin, or of any of God's holy saints; for as God is honoured in His saints when they are honoured, so He is dishonoured by any blasphemy uttered against them. The same kind

of blasphemy is committed by speaking injuriously of the sacraments of Jesus Christ, saying they are of no use or benefit to man; or of His Holy Scriptures, saying that they contain falsehoods; or of His Holy Church, denying those glorious privileges with which Christ has adorned her. Of this kind antichrist will be guilty: "He opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle" (*that is, His Church*), "and them that dwell in heaven," Apoc. xiii. 7. (7.) By attributing to creatures what belongs to God, as did the Jews when they attributed the miracles of Christ to Satan; and Herod, when he was pleased, and approved of the blasphemous flattery of the Tyrians, who, when he made a speech to them, said, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man; but forthwith the angel of the Lord struck him, because he had not given the honour to God; and being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost," Acts, xii. 22.

Q. 8. Is blasphemy a grievous sin?

A. Blasphemy is, of its own nature, a grievous, mortal sin, because it directly attacks the infinite majesty and perfections of God, is directly opposed to His praise and honour, and is a daring insult offered to His divine being. Hence we find it most severely condemned in Scripture. "For such as bless Him shall inherit the land: but such as curse Him shall perish," Ps. xxxvi. 22. "The man that curseth his God shall bear his sin; and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die; all the multitude shall stone him, whether he be a native or a stranger," Lev. xxiv. 15. "Woe to the sinful nation," saith Almighty God, "a people laden with iniquity, a wicked seed, ungracious children." Striking expressions these indeed, from the mouth of God! But what have they done to deserve such appellations? He immedi-

ately adds, "They have forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel: they are gone away backward," Isa. i. 4. "Therefore as the tongue of the fire devoureth the stubble, and the heat of the flame consumeth it, so shall their root be as ashes, and their buds shall go up as dust: for they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and have blasphemed the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people, and He hath stretched out His hand upon them and struck them; and the mountains were troubled, and their carcases became as dung in the midst of the streets," Isa. v. 24. Hence St Paul commands us to "put away anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of our mouth," Col. iii. 8. And we find in Scripture most severe judgments inflicted on those who were guilty of this crime. Thus (1.) When Salumith's son "fell at words in the camp with a man of Israel, and blasphemed the name *of God*, and had cursed it, he was brought to Moses; and they put him in prison till they might know what the Lord would command. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Bring forth the blasphemer without the camp, and let them that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the people stone him," which was done accordingly, Lev. xxiv. 10, 23. (2.) when Benhadad, king of Syria, was overcome by the people of Israel, his servants said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hills! therefore they have overcome us; but it is better we should fight against them in the plains, and we shall overcome them," 3 Kings, xx. 23. Accordingly he raised a great army, and returned to battle. "But a man of God said to the king of Israel, Thus saith the Lord, because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but is not God of the valleys, I will deliver all this multitude into thy

hand," ver. 28; and accordingly the Israelites gained a complete victory, and "slew a hundred thousand footmen in one day; and a wall fell upon seven and twenty thousand that were left," ver. 29. In like manner, (3.) When Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came to destroy Jerusalem, and sent the virtuous to king Ezekias, his general, who spoke many blasphemous things against God, the Lord said to him by his prophet Isaias, "Whom hast thou reproached, and whom hast thou blasphemed? Against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. . . . Thou hast been mad against Me, and thy pride hath come up to My ears. Therefore I will put a ring in thy nose, and a bit between thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. . . . And it came to pass that night, that an angel of the Lord came and slew in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and eighty-five thousand, . . . and Sennacherib departed and went away, . . . and when he was worshipping in the temple of Nesroch his god, his two sons slew him with the sword," 4 Kings, xix. 22. (4.) When Nicanor came with a great army against the Jews, and wished to attack them on the Sabbath, some of those who were in his army, "being constrained to follow him, said, Do not act so fiercely and barbarously, but give honour to the day that is sanctified, and reverence Him who beholdeth all things. Then the unhappy man asked if there were a mighty One in heaven, that had commanded the Sabbath-day to be kept? And when they answered, There is the living Lord Himself in heaven, that commanded the seventh day to be kept; then he said, And I am mighty upon the earth, and I command to take arms, and to do the king's business," 2 Mac. xv. 1. But in punishment of his blasphemy, he lost the battle; thirty thousand of

his men were slain in the field, he himself fell, his head was cut off, and his blasphemous tongue cut out, and given in pieces to the birds of the air," 2 Mac. xv. 1. Lastly, of Antiochus, who died a wretched death, it is said, "Thus that murderer and blasphemer, being grievously struck, died a miserable death in a strange country," 2 Mac. ix. 28.

Section II.

Of Vows.

Q. 9. What is a Vow?

A. A vow is a promise made to God of doing something that is good or more agreeable to God, or of abstaining from something that is bad or less pleasing to God, made with deliberation for His honour and glory. On which we must observe, (1.) That a vow is *a promise*, by which it differs from a resolution; for a resolution only signifies the present intention of the will to do anything without any obligation to continue in that intention, which therefore a man may alter and change as he pleases without sin: but a vow, besides declaring the present intention, superadds a promise to continue in that intention, and to fulfil it in action, which promise imposes a strict obligation under pain of sin of performing what it contains. Thus the Scripture says: "When thou hast made a vow to the Lord thy God, thou shalt not delay to pay it, for the Lord thy God will require it. And if thou delay, it shall be imputed to thee for a sin. If thou wilt not promise, thou shalt be without sin; but that which is once gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe,

and shalt do as thou hast promised to the Lord thy God, and hast spoken with thy own will, and with thy own mouth," Deut. xxiii. 21. (2.) It is a promise of something *good or more agreeable to God;* because, as by a vow we intend to please and honour God, it is absolutely necessary that what we promise be good in itself, and our doing it more pleasing to Him than our doing the contrary. Hence a promise made to God of doing anything trifling, indifferent, or evil, would be mocking and dishonouring rather than pleasing God, as it would be to man were such a promise made to him; and the Scripture says, "a foolish promise displeaseth God," Ecclus. v. 3. (3.) It is a promise *made to God;* because it is an act of religion by which we honour God, dedicating our will and our liberty in the thing we vow to His service, according to that of David, "vow ye, and pay to the Lord you God," Ps. lxxv. 12. And the prophet Isaias foretells that, under the gospel, "They shall worship the Lord with sacrifices and offerings; and they shall make vows to the Lord, and perform them," Isa. xix. 21. Hence vows made to a saint, as of altars or churches dedicated to that saint, are vowed to God in honour of that saint. (4.) It is a promise made *with deliberation;* because it must be a free act of the will, the person who makes it being sensible of what he is doing, and what obligation he brings on himself. Hence the Scripture says, "Thou shalt do as thou hast promised to the Lord thy God, and hast spoken with thy own will, and with thy own mouth," Deut. xxiii. 23.

Q. 10. Is it agreeable to God to bind ourselves by lawful vows?

A. Most undoubtedly: "The victims of the wicked are abominable to the Lord; the vows of the just are acceptable," Prov. xv. 8. Hence we are exhorted to

honour God by this means: "Vow ye, and pray to the Lord your God," Ps. lxxv. 12; and the prophet foretells that this shall be the practice of the followers of Christ, as we have just seen. Nay, we find it practised by the saints of God from the beginning. Thus, when Jacob fled from his brother Esau, and God appeared to him in Bethel, in the mysterious vision of the ladder, and comforted him, "he made a vow, saying, If God shall be with me, and shall keep in the way by which I walk, and shall give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, and I shall return prosperously to my father's house, the Lord shall be my God; . . . and of all things that Thou shalt give me I will offer tithes to Thee," Gen. xxviii. 20. And twenty years after, when he had become rich by the protection of Providence, God appeared to him again, and said, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou didst anoint the stone and make a vow to Me. Now, therefore, arise and return to thy native country," Gen. xxxi. 13; showing thereby that He approved of his vow, and blessed him on account of it. So Anna, the mother of Samuel, being barren, prayed to God for a son, and that her petition might be granted she vowed and said to God, "If Thou wilt look down and be mindful of me, and not forget Thy handmaid, and wilt give to Thy servant a man-child, I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head," 1 Kings (Sam.) i. 11. How acceptable this vow was to God the event showed, for she obtained from God the prophet Samuel and several other children. David in his psalms frequently speaks of his vows, and of the pleasure with which he would daily pay them before all the world. "With Thee," says he, "is my praise in the great Church; I will pay my vows in the sight of them that fear Him," Ps. xxi. 26. "Offer to God the sacrifice

of praise, and pay thy vows to the Most High," Ps. xlix. 14. "So will I sing a psalm to Thy name for ever and ever, that I may pay my vows from day to day," Ps. lx. 9. "I will go into Thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay Thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble," Ps. lxv. 13. "I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of all His people, in the courts of the house of the Lord; in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem," Ps. cxv. 18. In the New Testament, also, we read of St Paul, "that he had a vow," Acts, xviii. 18; that when he went up to purify himself in the temple, four men were given him for companions, who had a vow on them, Acts, xxi. 23; and that he went up to Jerusalem "to bring alms to his nation, and offerings and vows," Acts, xxiv. 17.

The reasons why vows are agreeable to God are, (1.) It is beneficial to our souls to make vows to God, when they are made with deliberation and prudence, and by proper advice; because they lay us under a holy necessity of doing good, fix the inconstancy of our mind, and confirm our good resolutions, which otherwise are often broken and often changed, and on that account insufficient to keep us steady in our duty. (2.) Because when we bind ourselves by vow we show a greater readiness to serve God, a greater devotion to him, and prove that we are in earnest in our desire to please Him, as a friend would show us a greater love and attachment if he gave an obligation under his hand to do us any service, than if he reserved to himself the liberty to do it or not, though at present he had the intention of doing it. (3.) Because the good we bind ourselves to by vow is a much greater offering made to God than what we do without it; for by the vow we give Him not only the good action, but

our very liberty itself; we give both the tree and the fruit.

Q. 11. What is forbidden with regard to vows?

A. We are strictly forbidden—(1.) To vow to do an evil action, which would be insulting God. (2.) To vow anything that is unworthy of God; for, "Cursed is the deceitful man, that hath in his flock a male, and making a vow offereth in sacrifice that which is feeble to the Lord; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts," Mal. i. 14. "Thou shalt not offer the hire of a strumpet nor the price of a dog in the house of the Lord thy God, whatsoever it be that thou hast vowed: because both these are an abomination to the Lord thy God," Deut. xxiii. 18.

Q. 12. Are we strictly obliged to perform our lawful vows?

A. Most undoubtedly, and it would be a grievous sin to break them; for (1.) If we be obliged in strict justice to perform the contracts, promises, and engagements made to men, how much more does the fidelity we owe to God oblige us to perform exactly the sacred engagements and promises which we make to Him? Hence (2.) He expressly commands us to be exact in performing our vows. "When thou hast made a vow to the Lord thy God, thou shalt not delay to pay it, because the Lord thy God will require it; and if thou delay, it shall be imputed to thee for a sin. If thou wilt not promise, thou shalt be without sin; but that which is once gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe, and shalt do as thou hast promised to the Lord thy God, and hast spoken with thy own will, with thy own mouth," Deut. xxiii. 21. "If thou hast vowed anything to God, defer not to pay it; for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeaseth Him. But whatsoever thou hast vowed pay it. And it is much

better not to vow, than, after a vow, not to perform the things promised," Eccl. v. 3; for "It is a ruin to a man, after he vows, to rètract," Prov. xx. 25. St Paul assures us that those widows who have been consecrated to God by a vow of chastity, and afterwards marry, "have damnation, because they have made void their first faith," 1 Tim. v. 12.

Q. 13. What practical consequence flows from these truths?

A. That though a prudent and lawful vow be most agreeable to God, yet it imposes a weighty obligation on him who makes it. The weakness of nature, and the inconstancy of the human heart, may lead us to repent of our good intentions, and therefore we ought never to make vows, especially such as are perpetual, except after due deliberation. We ought to examine our motives, to endeavour to know the will of God, to seek advice in every step we take, and then we may hope for strength to perform our vows.

Section III.

Of Oaths.

Q. 14. What is an Oath?

A. It is a calling Almighty God to witness the truth of what we say, and to punish us if what we say be false. To understand this, we must observe that there are many circumstances in life in which one man has a just and perfect right to know the truth from another; and yet, considering the depravity and deceit of the heart of man, especially where our own interest or selfish views are concerned, for "all men are liars," Ps. cxv. 11, we cannot entirely trust the mere word of another, especially where

it may be against his interest or his reputation to tell the truth. On the other hand, as man cannot see another's heart, it was necessary to have recourse to some certain means which might be depended on, to convince others that what we say is true. Now, as Almighty God is Himself the infallible truth, and searches the depth of the heart; as He hates lies, and will severely punish those who are guilty of them,—there can be no greater security for a man's telling the truth than his solemnly calling upon this great and tremendous Being to witness it, and to punish him if he tell a lie. Hence the Scripture says, "Men swear by One greater themselves: and an oath for confirmation is an end of all their controversy," Heb. vi. 16. Again, there are many circumstances in which one man is obliged or binds himself to do some service to another at a future time, and yet that other cannot always rely on his simple promise. In this case also the calling God to witness gives the greatest security for the performance. Hence there are two kinds of oaths, the one *affirmative*, by which we declare the truth of things past or present; the other *promissory*, by which we bind ourselves to do something for the time to come. Each of these may be either expressed by simple *asseveration*, or an *imprecation* may be added; but this imprecation, though not expressed, is always implied in the former.

Q. 15. Is it lawful to swear at all?

A. It is most lawful to swear a just oath when there is a proper cause for doing so; for "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve Him only, and thou shalt swear by His name," Deut. vi. 13, and "all they shall be praised that swear by Him," Ps. lxii. 12. Hence we find it done by God's holy servants: nothing is more common in the prophets than these expressions, "as the Lord liveth, so may the Lord do to me, and may He add more,"

and the like. St Paul says, "I call God to witness upon my soul, that to spare you I come not as yet to Corinth," 2 Cor. i. 23. And, "God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ," Phil. i. 8. St John also tells us that he saw an angel, who "lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever," Apoc. x. 5. We find in Scripture several examples of God Himself, who swears by Himself, or by His own life, to confirm the truth of what He says; thus, "I have sworn by Myself," says He, "that every knee shall bow to Me," Isa. xlv. 23. And "as I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live," Ezec. xxxiii. 11. And David tells us, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent," Ps. cix. 4. And "when God made promise to Abraham, because He had no one greater to swear by, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee," Heb. vi. 13. Besides, by a just and lawful oath we honour God. It is an act of worship done to Him, by which we testify our reverence and veneration for His Divine Majesty, as the infallible truth Who can never be deceived, and is the just avenger of all falsehood and lies.

Q. 16. Is it a true oath to swear by any creature? The reason of the doubt is, because as St Paul says that "men swear by one greater than themselves," and as the design of the oath is to confirm the truth by calling upon one who certainly knows it, and exposing ourselves to be punished by him if we tell a falsehood, it would seem necessary that the one we swear by be one who infallibly knows the truth, and can punish us if we deserve it, which can only be God.

A. Notwithstanding these reasons, we are to consider the swearing by any creature as a true oath, and the

same thing in substance as swearing by the Creator Who made these creatures, and Whose perfections shine forth in them; and this is the sense in which such oaths are to be understood, of which we find examples in Scripture, as when Moses said, "I call this day heaven and earth to witness," Deut. iv. 26. This is the explanation Jesus Christ Himself gives of such oaths, saying, "Whosoever shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that dwelleth in it; and he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon," Mat. xxiii. 21; for which reason He forbids all rash swearing by these creatures. "But I say to you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair black or white," Mat. v. 34. So to swear by the Gospel is to swear by Him Whose truths are contained in the Gospel; to swear by the cross is to swear by Him who died on the cross; to swear by any saints is to swear by Him Whose temples the saints are; to swear by one's soul is to swear by Him Who made our souls, and so of other creatures, at least of the more excellent in whom the perfections of God are more conspicuous—for to swear by anything contemptible would rather be a mockery than an oath.

Q. 17. What is required to make an oath just and lawful?

A. The Scripture requires three conditions. "Thou shalt swear, AS THE LORD LIVETH, in truth, and in judgment, and in justice," Jer. iv. 2—that is, that what we swear be true; that we swear with mature deliberation, and for a reasonable cause; and that the thing we swear to do be just and good. Otherwise,

if truth be wanting, we are guilty of *perjury;* if we swear without mature deliberation or a just cause, we are guilty of *rash swearing;* and if the thing we swear be bad, we are guilty of *unjust swearing*, which are the three sins against this branch of the second command.

Q. 18. What is perjury?

A. It is the sin of forswearing one's self, or taking a false oath, and may be committed in five different ways—(1.) When a man swears a thing to be true which in his own mind he knows to be false. (2.) When he swears a thing to be true which he, by mistake, thinks to be false, though in reality it be true. (3.) When one swears a thing to be true of which he is uncertain. (4.) When one promises upon oath to do a thing which he is resolved not to do. (5.) When a man promises upon oath to do a thing, and then really intends to do it, but afterwards refuses without a just and lawful cause; for in this latter case the performing what one promises upon oath is absolutely necessary to verify the oath, as much as the truth of what one swears as past or present is necessary to make that oath true; and therefore the Scripture says, "If any man bind himself by an oath, he shall not make his word void, but shall fulfil all that he promised," Num. xxx. 3.

Q. 19. Is perjury a grievous sin?

A. It is of its own nature a detestable sin; for (1.) It is a grievous injury done to God, and contains a formal contempt of God, and a great irreverence against Him; because by calling Him to witness a falsehood, we suppose either that He does not know the truth, that He can be corrupted to serve as a false witness and give testimony to a lie, or that He is indifferent whether His holy name be abused to attest lies or not. Hence it is a grievous profanation of His holy name, according

to that, "Thou shalt not swear falsely by My name, nor profane the name of Thy God; I am the Lord," Lev. xix. 12; and on account of these blasphemous suppositions, it is highly injurious to His infinite veracity and holiness. (2.) It is a heinous injury done to our neighbour and to human society; because it grievously deceives our neighbour by the very thing which ought to give him the greatest certainty of the truth. It tends to put an end to all society among men, which could never subsist unless we could rely on oaths. Hence in all nations perjury has been regarded as one of the most infamous crimes, and severely punished by all laws. (3.) It is a grievous injury to the person's own soul, because by a false oath he gives his consent to and prays for his own condemnation. (4.) It excludes a soul from heaven; because swearing according to truth when necessity requires it is made a condition of attaining to that happy place: "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest in Thy holy hill? . . . He that speaketh truth in his heart, who hath not used deceit in his tongue. . . . He that sweareth to his neighbour, and deceiveth not," Ps. xiv. 1. "Who shall ascend into the mount of the Lord; or who shall stand in His holy place? The innocent in hands and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour," Ps. xxiii. 3. (5.) It is prohibited under the severest threats: "Thou shalt not swear falsely by My name," Lev. xix. 12. "Let none of you imagine evils in your hearts against his friend, and love not a false oath, for all these are the things that I hate, saith the Lord," Zach. viii. 17. "Behold, you put your trust in lying words which shall not profit you, to steal, to murder, to commit adultery, to swear falsely; . . . and now, because you have done all these

works, saith the Lord, . . . I will cast you away from before My face," Jer. vii. 8, 13, 15 "I will come to you in judgment, and will be a speedy witness against sorcerers, and adulterers, and false swearers," Mal. iii. 5. "I saw a roll flying," says the prophet Zacharias, "and the angel said to me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the earth, . . . and every one that sweareth shall be judged by it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall . . . come to the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof and the stones thereof," Zach. v. 1.

When the king of Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem, and set up one of the king's seed as king, made a covenant, and took an oath of him, and afterwards revolted from the king of Babylon, and sent for help to the king of Egypt, God said, "Shall he that hath done this prosper, or be saved? And shall he escape that hath broken the covenant? As I live, saith the Lord God, in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he hath made void, and whose covenant he hath broken, even in the midst of Babylon shall he die, . . . for he hath despised the oath, breaking his covenant, and having done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As I live, I will lay upon his head the oath he hath despised, and the covenant he hath broken," Ezech. xvii. 13. So likewise, "In the days of David there was a famine for three years successively; and David consulted the oracle of the Lord; and the Lord said, It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gabonites," 2 Kings, xxi. 1, contrary to the promise under oath, that they should not be slain, made to them by

Joshua and the other princes of the people, Jos. ix. 15, 19.

Q. 20. What is meant by rash swearing?

A. Rash swearing is when a person, without necessity, and without deliberation and proper attention, swears by the holy name of God or of Jesus Christ, or of any creature. On this we must observe,—(1.) That the design of an oath being to confirm the truth, right reason requires that the truth to be confirmed should be a thing of some importance; and therefore it is an abuse of oaths to employ them in common discourse or on every trifling occasion. (2.) An oath is calling God to witness the truth, which certainly is in itself a very awful action, and therefore ought never to be done but with deliberation and reflection, even where the matter is of consequence, and an oath is necessary; this is to swear *in judgment*, which is entirely wanting in those who, without thought or consideration, swear almost at every word they pronounce. (3.) Swearing is an act of religion by which we honour God, flying to His testimony as the last resource in order to convince others of the truth; but rashly to call on God to witness every ordinary and trifling occasion is a dishonour to God, showing irreverence and disrespect for Him and His holy name.

Q. 21. Is rash swearing a great evil?

A. Rash swearing is an open transgression of the command of God, the profanation of His holy name, and the contempt of His Divine law. Persons who contract this shameful habit involve themselves in these evils,—(1.) They live in the daily and repeated crime of profaning the holy and adorable name of God, and in the frequent transgression of His express command, which says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord

thy God in vain." Now Jesus Christ declares to us, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." What is to be expected, then, from such an unchristian custom, but that, if it be not corrected, Almighty God will more and more withdraw His graces from those who show so little regard and so much disrespect for Him and His holy name, and leave them at last to themselves? (2.) It involves the highest contempt of Almighty God to call upon Him to witness the truth of every trifling thing one says. (3.) It is always more or less attended with scandal, especially in parents, masters and mistresses of families, and in people of the higher stations in life; for their example is readily followed by others, and children and servants do without scruple what they see done by their parents and masters. (4.) Such as have contracted this habit are daily exposed to the danger of perjury, and often are actually guilty of it; for we must not imagine that those only are guilty of perjury who, being called before a judge, swear falsely. Even in common discourse, if a man swears to a lie, though only in jest, he is guilty of perjury—and perjury is always a mortal crime; for whenever we call God to witness a lie, whether the matter be great or small, in jest or earnest, before a judge or in common conversation, it is always an insult to God Almighty, and an irreverence to His holy name. (5.) It is severely condemned by the Word of God: "Let not thy mouth be accustomed to swearing, for in it there are many falls"—namely, profanation of the name of God, and those others just mentioned. "Let not the naming of God be usual in thy mouth, and meddle not with the names of saints, for thou shalt not escape free from them." "A man that sweareth much shall be filled with iniquity, and the scourge shall not depart from his house." Even in this

world vengeance shall overtake him, for "if he swear in vain, he shall not be justified, for his house shall be filled with his punishment," Ecclus. xxiii. 9. "I will destroy men from the face of the land, saith the Lord; and I will stretch out My hand upon Juda, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, . . . and them that swear by the Lord, and swear by Melchom," Soph. i. 5, which shows how detestable a thing it is before God to swear even by the devil, for Melchom was the idol of the Ammonites. "The speech that sweareth much shall make the hair of the head stand upright; and its irreverence shall make one stop his ears," Ecclus. xxvii. 15. Hence our blessed Saviour, in order to prevent or root out this most wicked custom from among His followers, expressly forbids all rash swearing, as we have seen above, Q. 16. The same command is repeated by His apostle, saying, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath, but let your speech be Yea, yea; No, no; that ye fall not under judgment," James, v. 12. These sacred testimonies of the word of God deserve to be considered and pondered with particular attention.

Q. 22. But does not this express prohibition both of our Saviour and of His apostle include all kind of oaths without exception?

A. By no means; it does not include just and lawful swearing, when necessity requires, but it only regards rash swearing in common discourse—for (1.) Neither of these texts forbids to swear by God Himself; and that is what is commonly done when a just and lawful oath is necessary; they only forbid to swear by the creatures, which is so commonly done in rash swearing, as by the devil, or by one's soul. (2.) Both our Saviour and St

James conclude by saying, "Let your speech be Yea, yea; No, no;" which clearly shows that, in what goes before, they speak only of rash oaths given in our speech or conversation. (3.) We have seen above, Q. 15, that just and lawful oaths are commanded by God, and are an honour done to Him, and therefore cannot be forbidden by Jesus Christ or His apostle.

Q. 23. What is an unjust oath?

A. An unjust oath is when a person swears to do any evil thing. Now as everything evil is an offence to God, it is evident how great a crime it must be to call God to witness that you will offend Him. Such was the oath of those Jews who "bound themselves with a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul," Acts, xxiii. 12. And it is surprising how frequent these oaths are in the world, when persons are thrown into sudden passion or anger. Thus we see them used by mothers to their children when vexed by them; by masters to their servants; by servants to the cattle or horses, when they displease them, &c.

Q. 24. Is an unjust oath a great sin?

A. (1.) Those who swear to do a thing that is mortally sinful, and have a design to do it, commit at once two mortal sins—the one consisting in the will and design to do the evil action, and the other in the insult which they offer to Almighty God by using His authority and testimony in order to confirm them in offending Him; for what is the meaning of such an oath? It is as much as to say, "I swear by Thyself, O God, that I will transgress Thy will, and do the will of Thy enemy, the devil." A shocking oath indeed! (2.) Those who swear to do an evil action which they have no intention of doing are guilty of perjury, because they call to God

to witness a lie. O that passionate people, especially parents, would seriously think of this!

Q. 25. Is one obliged to keep an unjust oath?

A. The obligation of an oath arises from our calling God to witness that we will perform what we promise. Now, will Almighty God oblige us to commit a sin? Will He punish us if we do not commit it? This is impossible: God can never desire us, out of reverence to His holy name, to do what He expressly forbids; nay, the very pretending to do it, because we had so sworn, would be a double crime: besides committing the sin, we would be making the holy name of God a bond of iniquity. Were the forty Jews obliged to kill St Paul because they had sworn to kill him? Or was Herod obliged to kill St John the Baptist because he had sworn to grant Herodias's daughter whatsoever she should ask? Is he not highly condemned by all Christians as a murderer for putting that holy martyr to death? When David swore he would destroy Nabal, and was appeased by the prudence of Nabal's wife, he blessed God for it, and said to her, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, Who sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy speech; and blessed be thou, who hast kept me this day from coming to blood, and revenging me with my own hand," 1 Kings, xxv. 32. Hence it is plain that an unjust oath imposes no obligation of doing the sinful action. To make such an oath is a great sin, but it would be still a greater one to keep it; and therefore all that a person can do who has been so unhappy as to swear he would commit a crime, is heartily to repent, but by no means to increase his guilt by doing the evil action.

Section IV.

Blessing and Cursing.

Q. 26. Do we honour the name of God by blessing ourselves or others?

A. Very much; for when we call on the name of God to bless ourselves or others, we show that it is only from God we expect all good. It is therefore a prayer to God containing an acknowledgment that all good comes from Him; that He is all-powerful, and able to help us; that He is all goodness, and willing to help us; and that we put our trust and confidence in Him.

Q. 27. Are any particular persons authorised to bless others?

A. This is a part of the office of the pastors of the Church; and this was the case even in the old law itself. Thus, "The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Say to Aaron and his sons, Thus shall you bless the children of Israel, and you shall say to them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord show His face to thee: the Lord turn His countenance to thee, and give thee peace. And they shall invoke My name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them," Num. vi. 22. Here we see the different forms which God ordered the priests to use in blessing the people, with a promise that on this being done He would bless them. And not only Aaron and his sons, who were the chief pastors of the people of God, but also the whole tribe of Levi, was authorised to bless the people; for "at that time He separated the tribe of Levi, . . . to stand before Him in the ministry, and to bless His name," Deut. x. 8. "And the priests the sons of Levi shall come, whom the Lord thy God

hath chosen to minister unto Him, and to bless in His name," Deut. xxi. 5. In the new law, the Church, sensible of this part of the office of her pastors, reminds them of it, as well as of the other parts of their duty, when they are receiving the order of priesthood; for the bishop who ordains them says to them, "It is the duty of a priest to offer sacrifice, to bless, to preside, to preach, to baptize;" and when the priest's hands are consecrated by holy unction, the bishop says this prayer: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this unction, and our benediction; that whatever they shall bless, may be blessed; and whatever they consecrate, may be consecrated; in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And at the consecration of a bishop, the consecrating prelate, after anointing his hand, says, "Whatsoever thou shalt bless, may it be blessed; and whatsoever thou shalt sanctify, may it be sanctified; and may the laying on of this consecrated hand, be of service to all for salvation."

Q. 28. Does Almighty God, in consequence of the blessing of the pastors of His Church, bestow good things on His people?

A. We have seen above that He expressly promised to do so. "They shall invoke My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them," Num. vi. 27. "And the priests and Levites rose up, and blessed the people; and their voice was heard; and their prayer came to the holy dwelling-place of heaven," 2 Paral. xxx. 27. When Anna, the mother of Samuel, had poured forth her soul in fervent prayer for a son, because she was barren, Eli the high priest blessed her, and said, "Go in peace, and the Lord God of Israel grant thee thy petition which thou hast asked of Him." And immediately she went away comforted, and her countenance was no more

changed; and going down to her house, the Lord remembered her, and gave her her desire in having a son, who was the great prophet Samuel, 1 Kings (Sam.) i. 16. And when Samuel was grown up, and brought to Eli by his parents, according to his mother's vow, to be dedicated to the service of the tabernacle, Eli upon that occasion blessed them, and said to the father, The Lord give thee seed of this woman, for the loan which thou hast lent to the Lord: and they went home, and the Lord visited Anna, and she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters, 1 Kings (Sam.) ii. 20. Such was the effect of the blessing of the high priest of God.

Q. 29. Are we Christians commanded to bless one another?

A. We are; and it is our duty, as Christians, to bless even our enemies and persecutors. Thus our Saviour says, "But I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you; and pray for them that calumniate you," Luke, vi. 27. And His apostles repeat the same duty: "Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not," Rom. xii. 14. "Not rendering evil for evil, not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; for unto this you are called, that you may inherit a blessing," 1 Pet. iii. 9. And this the apostles literally fulfilled themselves. "We are reviled," says St Paul, "and we bless; we are persecuted, and we suffer it," 1 Cor. iv. 12.

Q. 30. What is the vice opposite to blessing ourselves or others, and which is forbidden by this command?

A. It is the crime of cursing, which is committed when we wish evil to ourselves, to our neighbours, or to any of God's creatures; whether this wish be conceived only in the heart or expressed in words. Now there are different degrees of malice in this, according to the

nature of the evil which one wishes; for the greater the evil is, the greater is the malice of wishing it.

Q. 31. Is cursing a great sin?

A. It is a most grievous sin; of a diabolical nature, full of malice, opposed to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and condemned by the Word of God. (1.) It is expressly forbidden in Scripture, as we have seen above, Q. 29. (2.) It is a grievous transgression of the second commandment, which forbids taking the name of God in vain; and He declares that the man shall not be guiltless, nor go unpunished, who does so. How much more he who uses the holy name of God to imprecate any evil upon himself or others? (3.) Our Saviour declares "that whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire," Mat. v. 2. How much more he who wishes that the devil may take his brother, or any other grievous evil come upon him? (4.) The Scripture speaks of this sin with horror: "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips;" and why all this? because "their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, . . . destruction and unhappiness are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes," Ps. xiii. 3. (5.) It also assures us that rash curses shall sooner or later be turned back on those that utter them; "as a bird flying to other places, and a sparrow going here or there; so a curse uttered without a cause shall come upon a man," Prov. xxvi. 2; the meaning of which is, that a curse uttered without a cause shall do no harm to the person that is cursed, but will return upon him that curseth, as, whithersoever a birds flies, it returns at last to its own nest. "The spirit of wisdom is benevolent, and will not acquit the evil speaker [in the original, the curser] of his lips; for God

is witness of his reins, and is a true searcher of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue," Wis. i. 6. Nay, what is still more dreadful, "While the ungodly curseth the devil, he curseth his own soul," Ecclus. xxi. 30—that is, he condemneth and curseth himself, inasmuch as by this sin he takes part with the devil, and is, as it were, his member and subject. (6.) It further declares that a curse is the portion and inheritance of those that love cursing: thus, "He loved cursing, and it shall come upon him; he would not have blessing, and it shall be far from him; he put on cursing like a garment, and it went in like water into his entrails, and like oil to his bones. May it be unto him like a garment which covereth him, and like a girdle with which he is girded continually," Ps. cviii. 18. And in another place the same royal prophet says of the wicked, "The labour of their lips shall overwhelm them; burning coals shall fall upon them; Thou wilt cast them down into the fire; in miseries they shall not be able to stand," Ps. cxxxix. 10. Now what is this labour of their lips? He tells us some verses before, "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent, the venom of asps is under their lips," ver. 4, by which is meant, as we have seen above, No. 4, from another psalm, "their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness," Ps. xiii. 3.

Q. 32. What are the reasons why cursing is so severely condemned?

A. They are chiefly these following—(1.) Because it is directly contrary to that charity and love of our neighbour which Christ so strictly requires of all His followers, and which obliges us to wish well to our neighbour, as we do to ourselves; for to love one is to wish him well and to do him good; but to wish one ill is to hate him; and the Scripture says, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not

whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes," 1 John, ii. 11; and "Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer hath life eternal abiding in him," 1 John, iii. 15. Now what greater act of hatred can be committed against one than to curse him—to pray that the devil may take him, or that God may damn him? (2.) It is directly contrary to the great command which Jesus Christ lays upon all His followers of returning good for evil, blessing for cursing, and prayers for ill-usage. "But I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that calumniate you," Luke, vi. 27. (3.) It directly opposes all the views of Jesus Christ, in what He did and suffered for the salvation of mankind: for Jesus Christ died for the salvation of souls; the curser prays that they may be damned: He shed His blood to redeem souls from hell and Satan; the curser wishes that the devil may take them, and that they may go to hell: Christ laid down His life to obtain for souls the blessing of God and eternal happiness; the curser prays that God may curse and deprive them of that happiness! What a dreadful contrast! What contradiction to the views and designs of our blessed Saviour! The curser declares himself an enemy, an adversary, an opponent of Jesus Christ; a servant of Satan, a promoter of his designs, and, as far as in him lies, a murderer of souls. (4.) Cursing is a total perversion of the use for which the tongue was given us. St James is particularly strong upon this head: he says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell; . . . the tongue no man can tame: a restless evil, full of deadly poison." These are dreadful appellations given

to this member; but on what account does the apostle speak in such terms of the tongue? Why so severe a condemnation of it? What is its crime, to deserve such treatment? He immediately adds the reason; "By it we bless God the Father; and by it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God! Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing! My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth, out of the same hole, sweet and bitter water? can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear grapes, or the vine figs?" James, iii. 6. (5.) It is a sin which is commonly attended with great scandal to little ones; for young children, hearing this diabolical language spoken by their parents and servants, soon learn to speak in the same strain, and from their example begin to offend God by so doing. "But he that shall scandalise," *that is, shall teach or cause to sin*, "one of these little ones that believe in Me," says Jesus Christ, "it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Mat. xviii. 6. (6.) To curse any of God's creatures, as horses, cattle, or any instrument one is using when a cross accident happens from them, is ingratitude and a provocation of Almighty God. All these are His benefits, the effects of His goodness, bestowed for the use and service of man. What must He think, then, when instead of thanking Him one curses them, and prays that the devil may take them? What would one say, what would be his misery, if these curses were immediately heard? If the Scripture says, "While the ungodly man curses the devil, he curses his own soul," Ecclus. xxi. 30, what would it say of him who curses the innocent creatures of God, the benefits He bestows upon us?

Q. 33. Are curses of this kind ever heard, so as to fall on those whom one curses?

A. We have seen above that rash curses uttered without a cause fall back upon the curser himself, and sooner or later bring evil upon him; but there are four cases wherein the Scripture tells us that curses are heard and fall upon those against whom they are uttered. (1.) When the poor curse the rich, who oppress and provoke them: hence the Scriptures say, "Turn not away thy eyes from the poor, for fear of anger; and give not to them that ask of thee room to curse thee behind thy back; for the prayer of him that curses thee in the bitterness of his soul shall be heard. He that made him will hear him, and therefore make thyself affable to the congregation of the poor," Ecclus. iv. 5. (2.) When widows and orphans curse their oppressors; thus, "The Lord will not accept any person against a poor man, and He will hear the prayer of him that is wronged. He will not despise the prayers of the fatherless, nor the widow, when she poureth out her complaint. Do not the widow's tears run down the cheek, and is not her cry against them that causeth them to fall? for from the cheek they go up even to heaven, and the Lord that heareth them will not be delighted with them," Ecclus. xxxv. 16. (3.) When parents curse their own children; for, "The father's blessing establishes the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation," Ecclus. iii. 11. We see a striking example of this in the curse which Noah pronounced upon his son Cham, and his posterity by Chanaan, who was the father of the ancient inhabitants of the Holy Land; for when Cham saw and laughed at his father's nakedness, while he lay drunk in an unseemly posture, "Noah awaking from the wine, when he had learned what his younger son had done to him, he said, Cursed be Chanaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren," Gen. ix. 24. In

consequence of this curse the posterity of Chanaan became a most wicked race, and were at last rooted out by the Israelites when they conquered the holy land; and those who were not extirpated, as the Gabaonites, were made miserable slaves, to whom Joshua said, "You shall be under a curse, and your race shall always be hewers of wood and carriers of water unto the house of my God," Josh. ix. 23. And the Scriptures, describing the abominations and wickedness of all the Canaanites, say, "They were a wicked generation, and their malice natural, and their thought could never be changed," and immediately adds the source of all their misery, in these words, "For it was a cursed seed from the beginning," Wisd. xii. 10, alluding to the curse of Noah upon his son, their father. (4.) When people curse themselves: of which we have a striking example in the whole people of Israel; for on hearing the accounts which the spies gave of the Holy Land, and of the strength of its inhabitants, they lost their courage and confidence in God, and in their vexation of mind prayed this curse upon themselves: "Would to God we may die in this vast wilderness, and that the Lord may not bring us into this land, lest we fall by the sword, and our wives and children be led away captives," Numb. xiv. 3. Their murmuring on this occasion was most offensive to God, and He appeared to Moses, and said, "How long will this people detract Me? how long will they not believe Me, for all the signs I have wrought before them? I will strike them therefore with pestilence, and will consume them," ver. 11. Moses upon this interposed with a most fervent prayer, and appeased His indignation, so that God forgave them the sin of their murmuring; nevertheless, He would on no account forgive the curse they had prayed upon themselves, but swore by Himself that it would be fully ac-

complished; "As I live, saith the Lord, according as you have spoken in My hearing, so will I do to you; on the wilderness shall your carcases lie. All you that have murmured against Me, shall not enter into the land, . . . but your children, of whom you said that they should be a prey to the enemies, will I bring in, that they may see the land which you have despised. Your carcases shall lie in the wilderness. Your children shall wander in the desert forty years, until the carcases of their fathers be consumed in the desert," ver. 28. A dreadful example this for us, who are travelling through the wilderness of this life towards the true land of promise! and which shows what danger those run of never entering there, who in their passion and anger pray curses upon themselves, which tend to exclude them from it. A still more dreadful example we have in the Jews, who, insisting with Pilate to have our Saviour crucified, invoked this dreadful curse upon themselves and their posterity, "His blood be upon us and on our children!" This curse was heard to their sad cost; they were, from that day, rejected from being the people of God; misery, ruin, and destruction soon pursued them, and their unhappy posterity groan under this curse to the present day.

Q. 34. But what shall be said of those who have an unhappy custom of cursing?

A. That their conduct is most shocking and anti-Christian; for (1.) Is it not a shame for a Christian to be continually praying to the devil for the ruin of his own or his neighbour's soul, and so careless and negligent in praying to Almighty God for his own or his neighbour's salvation? And this is the case of all who have fallen into this unhappy custom. They scarcely speak a sentence without an imprecation on

themselves or some of God's creatures, and yet think it an intolerable task to bend their knee to pray to God for His blessings, or to raise up their hearts from time to time to Him! (2.) They employ themselves continually in speaking the language of the damned here, and on that account may justly fear it will be their portion for eternity hereafter. (3.) Their unhappy language is a sign of the country to which they belong. All intelligent creatures are divided into three classes: First, the angels and saints, whose country is heaven, whose language is to praise and glorify God continually, to bless His holy name, and to pray for their brethren upon earth. Secondly, the devils and damned souls, whose country is hell, whose language is to blaspheme the God of heaven, to curse their folly in having brought themselves to that place of misery by their sins, to curse the day they were born, those who first taught them to sin, and the partners of their crimes. Lastly, we men who are still upon the earth, travelling towards one or other of these two countries. If, now, we wish to know to which of these countries we belong, consider whose language we speak. If a stranger be in any country upon his travels, and can speak only his own language, this immediately shows what his country is; and when St Peter was attacked as belonging to our Saviour, and denied it, they replied, "Surely thou art also one of them; for even thy speech doth discover thee," Mat. xxvi. 73: that discovered him to be a Galilean, and of the disciples of Jesus.

(4.) They can have no inducement to it from profit, pleasure, or honour, as in other sins: they make themselves slaves of the devil merely to please him and promote his service; for it is a delight to Satan to hear the holy name of God so unworthily

abused, and it is no less pleasing to him to hear Christians praying so frequently to himself, especially for some evil to themselves or others. Satan always desired to be honoured as God; but not being able to obtain that honour to the full from Christians, it delights him at least that they should often thus pray to him. (5.) Let not such people imagine that their bad custom will excuse them before God. Such a custom itself is criminal, and they are bound in duty to overcome it. If, indeed, they use all their efforts to do so, this will excuse them from guilt when, on any particular occasion, the force of custom may betray them; but as long as they entertain this custom, use no endeavour or take no pains to overcome it, this shows that they consent to it, and consequently are answerable for all its effects. Neither let them delude themselves as if they had no great custom of cursing, because they do not fall into it more than once or twice a-day; alas! once a-day makes three hundred and sixty-five curses in the year! and if more in a day, to what a multitude must it amount in the year! What will it be in a number of years?—what in one's whole life? And if our Saviour assures us "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment," Mat. xii. 36, what account must they give of their curses, who have the custom of uttering them, when they shall appear against them in such immense numbers? The curses they utter are not blown away by the wind. Though they themselves think no more of them, they are not forgotten; they are laid up in store for the great day, and if not cancelled by sincere repentance and amendment, will one day appear against them to their eternal confusion. A frightful catalogue, indeed, will they make. (6.) Let them consider seriously

the words of our Saviour: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of a good treasure bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of an evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it at the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned," Mat. xii. 35. What then will be the fate of cursers and swearers? What we have here seen against this unhappy custom of cursing is equally applicable to that of rash swearing.

Q. 35. But if the custom be only of speaking the bad words, while the person has no ill-will in his heart, and would be very far from wishing the evil expressed in the words to any person, will not this excuse him?

A. Where this is really the case, it will certainly excuse him from the malice of hatred, and of wishing evil to his brother in his heart; but it will never excuse him from the guilt of profaning the holy name of God, of praying externally to the devil, of giving scandal to others, or of perverting the use of the tongue, and of making that member, which is given us to praise God, an instrument of honouring Satan. Neither will it excuse him from directly transgressing the injunctions of the Word of God, and of grieving the Holy Spirit; "Let no evil speech proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the edification of faith, that it may minister grace to the hearers; and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy, be put away from you, with all malice," Eph. iv. 29. "Now put you also away all anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of your mouth," Col. iii. 8. But can it be said with truth, that those who

have a custom of cursing upon the smallest provocation are always free from wishing in their heart what the words express? It may indeed be that, when their passion is over, they wish no evil; but at the time they pronounce these curses, when passion hurries them on, and their mouth speaks in the bitterness of their soul, who can answer how far their heart goes along with their words? Our blessed Saviour assures us that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and when is the abundance of the heart greater than on such occasions? The Israelites, in the heat of their vexation, cursed themselves that they might die in the wilderness; no sooner was their passion over than they repented of that expression, and offered to go into the Holy Land and fight against its inhabitants; but this did not hinder God from hearing their curse, and declaring with an oath, "According as you have spoken in my hearing, so will I do to you; in the wilderness shall your carcases lie." When Christians curse in their passion, and in the bitterness of their soul, do their hearts go less along with their words than the hearts of those Israelites did?

CHAPTER XII.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Q. 1. WHAT is the third commandment?

A. "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour and shalt do all thy works; but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work on it, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy beast, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it," Exod. xx. 8.

Q. 2. What is the general end or design of this commandment?

A. To understand this, we must observe that all the actions of man may be divided into two kinds: those which tend immediately to the service of God, and those which relate to worldly affairs; or those which regard the care of the soul, and those which concern the care of the body. Now, as we owe ourselves wholly to God, we ought to perform even our worldly actions in such a manner as to please Him, by doing them in obedience to His will, and for His honour and glory. But besides thus sanctifying our worldly employments, the

very light of nature tells us that we are strictly obliged to set aside some part of our time for the practice of those duties alone which immediately tend to the worship and service of God—such as prayer, praise, thanksgiving, sacrifice, and the like. Our whole time belongs to God, for the Scripture says to Him, "Thine is the day, and Thine is the night, Thou hast made the moon and the sun; . . . the summer and the spring were formed by Thee," Ps. lxxiii. 16. Consequently, as it is impossible for us in the present order of Providence to spend all our time in these holy exercises which belong immediately to the service of God, it is our bounden duty to set apart at least some portion of our time for these purposes. Again, as our one, only, necessary affair in this world is to save our souls, even those actions which regard the body ought to be so regulated as to be subservient to this end; but considering how liable we are to be led away by the concerns of the body, and to forget the soul, it is manifest that we ought to have some particular times set apart, to be employed only in what concerns our salvation. All mankind agree in allotting proper times to the several necessities of the body, such as sleeping, eating, exercise, and the like: much more ought we to allot proper times to the necessities of the soul: it is of infinitely more value than the body; we have come into the world only to procure its salvation, and it will profit us nothing to gain the whole world if we lose it. Yet such is the perversion of our heart, and our attachment to our worldly concerns, that if left to ourselves to determine the proper times for the service of God and the care of our souls, we are apt to neglect it entirely; for we see how backward we are to observe those times which God Himself has commanded to be laid aside for these ends. For this reason Almighty God was pleased to determine by an express

command what portion of our time He requires to be spent in His service only, and in what concerns our salvation. This is the general end and design of this third commandment. While God allows us the other days in the week for our temporal affairs and the concerns of our body, He expressly requires that we keep holy the seventh day, dedicating it entirely to His service and the concerns of our souls.

Q. 3. Why did God command the seventh day of the week to be set apart for these ends, rather than any other, by His people, in the old law?

A. (1.) Because, having completed the great work of the creation in the space of six days, "On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had done; and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work," Gen. ii. 2. He commanded that all men should keep that day holy, in memory of the great work of the creation, and of the rest or repose which He took after His work was finished. This is the reason given in the commandment itself, for keeping holy the seventh day, where it is also called the Sabbath of the Lord; that is, the day of His rest; for the word Sabbath signifies a rest from labour. Now, on this account, the seventh day had been kept holy by the servants of God from the beginning; and though this was interrupted during their captivity in Egypt, yet we find it renewed again, immediately on their coming into the wilderness, even before the commandments were given on Mount Sinai. For when the manna was sent them from heaven, none of it fell on the seventh day, and they were ordered to gather as much on the sixth as served for the seventh also; and what they thus gathered on the sixth day did

not corrupt, as it always did, when they gathered more than one day's provision on any other day. The reason of this is thus laid down in Scripture: "Gather it six days, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord; therefore it shall not be found," Exod. xvi. 26. (2.) Another reason why the Israelites were commanded to keep holy the seventh day was this: To be a sign of their being the people of the true God; because by keeping this day in memory of the creation, and of the rest which God took after all was completed, they thereby acknowledged Him to be the great Creator of the universe, and professed that they were His servants and people. Thus God says to them, "See that you keep My Sabbath; because it is a sign between you and Me in your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctify you. . . . Let the children of Israel keep the Sabbath, and celebrate it in their generations. It is an everlasting covenant between Me and the children of Israel, and a perpetual sign," Exod. xxxi. 13, 16. (3.) That it might be a figure of the rest of Jesus Christ in the grave, on the seventh day, after He had ended all His sufferings, and completed the great work of our redemption by His passion and death.

Q. 4. By whom and for what reason was the observance of the seventh day of the week changed into that of the Sunday, or first day, among the Christians?

A. This change was made by the Church of Christ, in the time of the apostles, in honour of Jesus Christ, and therefore it is called in Scripture the Lord's Day, Apoc. i. 10. On it we find the first disciples were accustomed to meet, to celebrate the holy mysteries, to hear the Word of God, and to make their collections for their poorer brethren; thus, "On the first day of the week, when they were assembled to break bread, Paul

discoursed with them," Acts, xx. 7. The same apostle, writing to the Corinthians about making a collection for the brethren in Jerusalem, says, "On the first day of the week, let every one of you put apart with himself, laying up what it shall well please him; that when I come, the gatherings be not then to be made," 1 Cor. xvi. 2. The reasons for making this change were these: (1.) God commanded the seventh day to be kept holy by the people of Israel as a continual memorial of the creation, because that was then the greatest and most remarkable thing God had done in the world. But after the coming of our Saviour, many more wonderful things were done; much greater benefits were bestowed on mankind upon the first day, which made it proper to change the keeping of the seventh into the first, as a continual memorial of these favours.

On the first day of the week our Saviour rose from the dead, having conquered sin and death, and completed the great work of our redemption, and therefore it is called *the Lord's day*. On the first day the apostles received their commission from Jesus Christ, as apostles, with the same power and authority which He, as man, had received from His Father. "As My Father sent Me, so I send you," John, xx. 21. On the same day they received the power of forgiving the sins of the people, when He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them," ver. 23. On the first day the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles to confirm, enlighten, and inflame them, and to enable them to execute the great work of converting the world to the faith of Christ. On the same day the faith and law of Christ were first solemnly published to the world, on it the Church of Christ was, properly

speaking, formed and established, and the great privilege of infallibility conferred upon her, by the Holy Ghost. Add to all this, that the creation itself is also most fitly commemorated on that day, as on it that great work was begun. (2.) Another reason for the change was this: the seventh day was appointed for the Israelites, to be a sign of their being the people of God, as we have seen above; but as on the coming and death of Christ they were no more His people, the observation of that day was no more necessary. (3.) As the keeping of the seventh day was a figure of the rest of Jesus Christ in the grave, by His death and burial this figure was fulfilled; and therefore, like all the other ceremonial parts of the old law, which were figures of Christ, on being fulfilled by Him, it was then abrogated.

Here, however, it must carefully be observed, that though the particular day of the week to be kept holy for the service of God was changed from the seventh to the first, yet the obligation of keeping one in seven for that purpose, and keeping it in the manner prescribed by this command, remains in all its force; for by the law of nature itself we are obliged to set apart some time for that purpose, and it is the express law of God that this should be one day in the week, which, for the above reasons, is now fixed to be the Lord's day.

Section I.

Of Sanctifying the Lord's Day.

Q. 5. In what manner are we commanded to keep the Lord's day?

A. The command itself is perfectly clear on this point, and contains two parts. In the one we are commanded to abstain from all unnecessary worldly actions, called servile works, on that day, as being a hindrance to the sanctification of it: in the other part we are commanded to keep it holy, by exercising ourselves in such works of piety and virtue as immediately tend to the worship and service of God, and the good of our own souls. And as it is by these latter that the day is properly and truly kept holy, therefore all worldly works are forbidden, that our mind may be at leisure to apply itself wholly to them.

Q. 6. How great is the obligation of abstaining from all unnecessary servile work on the Lord's day?

A. This will clearly appear from the command itself, the promises made in Scripture to those who obey it, and the threats against those who trangress this duty. Thus,

1. From the command itself; because (1.) It begins with the word *Remember*, which shows the importance of this duty, and how strictly God requires it to be observed; for even among ourselves, when masters give any orders to their servants, which they strictly require to be obeyed, nothing is more common than to use this expression. (2.) It prohibits all such works in the strictest manner: "In it thou shalt do no manner of work." (3.) It prohibits parents and masters from allowing their children or servants, or even their cattle, to work on it. (4.) It forbids the very strangers who may happen to be with us to do any work on that day. (5.) This command is repeated by the prophet Jeremiah in these strong terms: "Thus saith the Lord: Take heed to your souls, and carry no burdens on the Sabbath-day, and bring them not in by the gates of Jerusalem.

And do not bring burdens out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work; sanctify the Sabbath-day, as I have commanded you," Jer. xvii. 21. (6.) The church of Christ with the whole weight of her authority forbids the same, and Christ declares that "he that will not hear the church is to be accounted as a heathen and a publican," Mat. xviii. 17.

2. From the encouraging promises annexed to the performance of this duty, which are: "Keep My Sabbaths, and reverence My sanctuary; I am the Lord. If you walk in My precepts, and keep My commandments and do them, I will give you rain in due season; and the ground shall bring forth its increase, and the trees shall be filled with fruit, . . . and you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land without fear," Lev. xxvi. 2. And the Scripture goes on for several verses declaring, in the name of God, many other blessings that would attend them if they carefully observed this command. In the prophecy of Jeremiah, after declaring the command of not working on the Sabbath, and complaining of His people for the neglect of it, Almighty God goes on thus: "And it shall come to pass, if you will hearken to Me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burdens by the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day; and if you will sanctify the Sabbath-day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings and princes, sitting on the throne of David; . . . and this city shall be inhabited for ever," Jer. xvii. 24. "Thus saith the Lord, . . . Blessed is the man that doth this, and the son of man that shall lay hold of this, that keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it, that keepeth his hands from doing evil. . . . They that shall keep My Sabbaths, and shall choose the things that please Me, and shall hold fast My covenant, I will give

to them, in My house and within My walls, a place and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall never perish. . . . I will bring them into My holy mount, and I will make them joyful in My house of prayer; their holocausts and their victims shall please Me upon My altars," Isa. lvi. 2. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy own will in My holy day, and call the Sabbath delightful, and the holy of the Lord glorious, and glorify Him, whilst thou dost not thy own ways, and thy own will is not found to speak a word: Then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord, and I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth, and will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," Isa. lviii. 13.

We see, in these promises, all kind of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, plenty of the necessaries of this life, internal happiness and delight of the soul, an everlasting name that shall never perish, admittance to a place within His house, and the possession of His holy mountain, the heavenly Sion, promised in the most solemn manner to those who do not profane the sacred times dedicated to the service of the Almighty. What encouragement!

3. From the punishments threatened against those who transgress this command: thus, "Keep My Sabbath," says God Himself, "for it is holy unto you: he that shall profane it, shall be put to death: he that shall do any work in it, his soul shall perish out of the midst of the people. Six days shall you do work; on the seventh day is the Sabbath; the holy rest to the Lord. Every one that shall do any work on this day shall die," Exod. xxxi. 14. In Leviticus, xxvi., above cited, after declaring all the blessings that should come upon His people

if they kept His Sabbaths, and walked in His commandments, Almighty God proceeds to declare the many evils that should come upon them if they did otherwise; to wit, poverty, famine, pestilence, wars; and then adds, if they still persisted in their wickedness, "And I will destroy your land, and your enemies shall be astonished at it, when they shall be the inhabitants of it; and I will scatter you among the Gentiles, and I will draw out the sword after you, and your land shall be desert, and your cities destroyed. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths all the days of her desolation: when you shall be in the enemies' land, she shall keep a Sabbath, and rest in the Sabbaths of her desolation, because she did not rest in your Sabbaths, when you dwelt therein," Levit. xxvi. 32. So also in Jeremiah, after showing the blessings that should come upon those that kept the Sabbath, He adds, "But if you will not hearken to Me to sanctify the Sabbath-day, and not to carry burdens, and not to bring them in by the gates of Jerusalem by the Sabbath-day, I will kindle a fire at the gates thereof, and it shall devour the houses of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched," Jer. xvii. 27.

4. Add to all this the following striking examples. (1.) That of the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath, which is thus related in Scripture: "And it came to pass, when the children of Israel were in the wilderness, and had found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day, that they brought him to Moses and Aaron, and the whole multitude; and they put him into prison, not knowing what they should do with him. And the Lord said to Moses, Let that man die; let all the multitude stone him without the camp. And when they had brought him out, they stoned him: and he died, as the Lord had commanded," Num. xv. 32. (2.) That of the whole people

of Israel, who were at last cast out of their own land, and carried away captive for this sin, as the Lord had threatened in Levit. xxvi. above cited; for God Himself, recounting to His prophet Ezechiel, chap. xx., all the favours He had done to His people, and their continual rebellion against Him, which had caused him at last to cast them off, and for which He was now become inexorable, declares, no less than four different times in that chapter, that the violation of His Sabbath was one of the principal causes of so dreadful a judgment.

The holy servant of God, Nehemiah, was very sensible of this; for when, about the end of the Babylonish captivity, he came from Babylon to Jerusalem, with authority from the king to rebuild the city and govern the people, on his arrival he reformed several abuses, and among others he tells us, "In those days I saw in Juda some treading the presses upon the Sabbath, and carrying sheaves, and leading asses with wine, and grapes, and figs, and bringing them into Jerusalem upon the Sabbath-day. And I charged them that they should sell on a day on which it was lawful to sell. Some Tyrians also dwelt there, who brought fish and all manner of wares, and they sold them on the Sabbaths to the children of Juda in Jerusalem. And I rebuked the chief men of Juda, and said to them, What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath-day? Did not our fathers do these things, and our God brought all this evil upon us and upon this city? And you bring more wrath upon Israel by violating the Sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem were at rest on the Sabbath-day, I spoke; and they shut the gates, and I commanded that they should not open them till after the Sabbath; and I set some of my servants at the gates, that none should bring in burdens on the Sabbath; . . .

and I spoke also to the Levites that they should be purified, and should come to keep the gates, and should sanctify the Sabbath-day : for this also remember me, O my God, and spare me, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies," 2 Esdras (Nehem.) xiii. 15. (3.) The example of Nicanor, that furious enemy of the people of God, who, going to battle against the valiant Judas, " purposed to set upon him with all violence on the Sabbath-day. And when the Jews that were constrained to follow him said, Do not act so fiercely and barbarously, but give honour to the day that is sanctified, and reverence Him that beholdeth all things; that unhappy man asked, if there were a mighty One in heaven, that had commanded the Sabbath to be kept? And when they answered, There is the living God in heaven, the mighty One that commandeth the seventh day to be kept; then he said, And I am mighty upon earth, and I command to take arms," 2 Macch. xv. 1. But in punishment of his impiety, his great army was totally overthrown by a handful which Judas had with him; five-and-thirty thousand were slain, and himself killed on the field; his head and hand with the shoulder cut off, and carried in triumph to Jerusalem; his tongue cut out, and given in pieces to birds, and his hand hanged up over against the temple, as is related in the following part of the chapter.

Q. 7. What kind of works are chiefly forbidden on the Lord's day?

A. The design of forbidding us to work on the Lord's day is, that we may not be hindered by our worldly affairs from applying to those holy employments which regard the worship of God and the good of our souls. Consequently, whatever worldly works would naturally engross our time, and carry off our minds from the neces-

sary attention to the proper employments of the day, are all, according to the spirit of the law, forbidden upon the Lord's day. Of these we have chiefly the following classes: (1.) All servile works, properly so called; namely, all such bodily works as are commonly performed by servants, tradesmen, and labouring people, for gaining their bread, and which regard the concerns of the body and of this world. (2.) All courts of justice, processes, trials, examination of witnesses, and the like; because these things occupy much time, and engross the mind. (3.) All markets, fairs, making of bargains, and even private trading, for the same reasons; and we have seen above, last Q. No. 4, what judgment the Scripture passes on all such employments. (4.) Carrying loads and burdens, either by one's self or with cattle, of which see also the preceding question. (5.) All meetings for dancing, drinking, or gaming, are also strictly forbidden on Sundays by the Church, for several reasons,—Because of the danger of spending too much time in them, because they greatly dissipate the mind from everything serious, and because they are the source of many sins. They are dangerous at all times, often fatal, and are justly considered more the service of Satan than of God, and consequently never to be used on the sacred times appointed for God's service.

Q. 8. Is it lawful in any case to work on the Lord's day?

A. There are three cases in which this is allowed. (1.) Real necessity: as for example, to prepare food for man or beast, which could not be done before: thus our Saviour excused His disciples for plucking the ears of corn, and eating them on the Sabbath-day, and declared them innocent in so doing, Mat. xii. 3, 7. To remedy any sudden misfortune that may happen to man or beast:

thus our Saviour says, "What man shall there be among you that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not take hold of it and lift it up?" Mat. xii. 11. So also He says, "Doth not every one of you on the Sabbath-day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water?" Luke, xiii. 15. To defend one's self against enemies in war, when attacked by them on the Sabbath-day, as we read, 1 Mac. ii. 40. To save one's corn, if it be in danger of being destroyed by weather. (2.) Charity, in assisting the poor and distressed; provided this be done without any return, either in work or money. We find our Saviour frequently doing works of charity on the Sabbath, curing the sick, healing the lame, or the like, and defending His so doing by unanswerable arguments against the Pharisees, who blamed Him. And the reason is, because charity is the end of the law, and therefore no law can hinder works of real charity. (3.) Works of piety for the service of God or religion, provided they be done for His sake, and without any temporal reward. Thus our Saviour says, "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath-day the priests in the temple break the Sabbath, and are without blame?" Mat. xii. 5. But in all these cases care must be taken that the work do not interfere with, nor hinder the assisting at, the public worship of God on these days, which we are strictly commanded to attend, unless when necessity excuses from it, as in the case of assisting and waiting upon the sick, who cannot be left alone.

Q. 9. What is required in order to sanctify the Lord's day?

A. It would be a great mistake to imagine that because we are forbidden to work on the Lord's day, we may therefore make it a day of bodily rest, and spend it

in idleness or in vain amusements; or that it is sufficient to assist at the public worship of God, and then idle away the rest of the day. The design of Almighty God in forbidding work on that day, is to give us time and leisure for other more important duties, which regard His service and our own salvation; and He expressly commands us "to keep that day holy." Now to keep any day holy is to apply it to holy uses, to spend it in holy exercises, and these are only such as regard the worship of God and the concerns of our souls. Indeed, things regarding these two ends go always hand in hand; for whatever tends to the glory of God is useful to our souls; and whatever is truly of service to our souls is always agreeable to God, and makes that time holy which is spent in them. Hence, the proper exercises for the Lord's day, in order to sanctify it, or keep it holy, are chiefly these following: (1.) To assist at the public worship of God in offering the holy sacrifice of the altar; and this duty is strictly enjoined to all by an express command of the Church, and therefore can never be neglected without a grievous sin, unless real necessity excuse from it. (2.) To attend the preaching of the word of God, and the explanation of the Christian doctrine; by which all are instructed, excited to their duty as Christians, and their fervour renewed in God's service, which our worldly occupations throughout the week are too apt to weaken and cool. (3.) To prepare for, and approach to, the holy sacraments, when one's own devotion, or the solemnity of the time, calls to that duty. (4.) To read the holy Scriptures, and other books of piety and devotion; for these are the fountains of heavenly light, by which God speaks to the soul, and illuminates her with the knowledge of His will, when read with humility of heart and a pious intention;

and especially when to reading is joined serious and attentive meditation on the great truths contained in them. (5.) To examine diligently the state of our souls; how we have spent the previous week, and how our accounts stand with God; to call to mind the numberless benefits we have received, and daily do receive, from His infinite goodness; to thank and praise Him for them; and to humble ourselves at the sight of our own ingratitude towards Him. (6.) To converse with God, in humble prayer, both for ourselves and others; and beg of Him what He sees we stand in need of, both for soul and body. (7.) To exercise works of charity and mercy, spiritual and corporal. (8.) To watch over those under our charge, whether children or servants, and see that they sanctify that holy day, giving them time, and other necessary helps of good books or instruction, for that purpose.

Q. 10. How much of the Lord's day ought we to spend in these holy exercises?

A. The law of God commands us "to keep that day holy;" consequently it is not enough to keep an hour or two holy, for an hour or two is not the day. If one hires a servant for a day's work, though the servant should employ an hour or two or more in working for him, he will not be satisfied with that as a day's work, but will expect that he should work the whole day, or at least such a portion of it as in the common estimation of mankind may truly be said to be a day. In like manner, in order to keep the Lord's day holy, we must employ not a small part only, but such a portion of it as may be esteemed the day, in those holy exercises which truly make it a holy day.

Q. 11. But is it not lawful to recreate one's self on the Lord's day, by taking some innocent amusement?

A. To refresh the mind with innocent recreation on the Lord's day is not forbidden; nay, it is laudable when one's state of body or mind requires it; but amusements and recreations are not the proper means to make that time holy which is spent in them: consequently, they are only allowable as a relaxation of the mind after the duties of the day are fully complied with, and therefore to be used with moderation; for if the greater part of the day be spent in amusement, it can never be said that that day is kept holy.

Q. 12. Why then does the command of the Church mention only hearing mass as the necessary duty for sanctifying the Lord's day?

A. The Spirit of God, and of His Church, are the same, and cannot contradict one another. The command of God, and the command of His Church, oblige us to keep the Lord's day holy; consequently, they both oblige us to the performance of such exercises of devotion as may truly make it holy. But as the different exercises of devotion are not equally suitable for all, therefore God and His Church leave it to each one to choose, either by himself or with the advice of his pastor, such holy exercises as may be most proper for him. Yet as assisting at the public worship of God is the duty of all, on days set apart for that purpose, God Himself in the old law, and the Church in the new, command this on these solemnities. Not as if this alone were enough, but to show that all are obliged to this as an essential duty, being afterwards left to their own choice to employ themselves in such other pious works as suit them best in order to fulfil the words and spirit of the law "in keeping that day holy."

Section II.

Of Sanctifying the Holidays.

Q. 13. Did God command any other days to be kept holy in the old law besides the Sabbath or seventh day?

A. Yes; He instituted several other great solemnities throughout the year, in memory of the special favours which He had bestowed upon His people, that they might never forget them, but render to Him due thanksgiving and homage on the annual return of these festivals. He commanded these solemnities to be observed with the same religious veneration as the Sabbath itself, by abstaining from all servile works, and offering sacrifices of adoration and praise to His holy name. The institution of these solemnities or holidays is related in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, and the various sacrifices that were to be offered on each of them are prescribed in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of the book of Numbers. And as they are all commanded to be kept in the same manner as the Sabbath or seventh day, so they are called in Scripture by the same name, the Sabbaths of the Lord, or days of rest from servile work to be kept holy to the Lord. Concerning their institution, their number, and the manner of keeping them, we have this account in Scripture: (1.) The feast of unleavened bread, or of the passover, instituted in memory of the deliverance from Egypt, lasted for seven days. "The first day shall be most solemn unto you," says Almighty God, "and holy: you shall do no servile work therein. But you shall sacrifice to the Lord

seven days. And the seventh day shall be more solemn and more holy; and you shall do no servile work therein," Levit. xxiii. 7. "And when your children," says Moses to the people, "shall say to you, What is the meaning of this service? You shall say to them, It is the victim of the passage of the Lord, when He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, striking the Egyptians, and saving our houses," Exod. xii. 26. "And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying, This is what the Lord did to me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be as a sign in thy hand, and as a memorial before thy eyes; and that the law of the Lord be always in thy mouth, for with a strong hand the Lord hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt," Exod. xiii. 8. (2.) The feast of Pentecost, on which the first fruits of the harvest were offered to God. Of this, after prescribing the sacrifices to be offered, the Scripture says, "And you shall call this day most solemn and most holy. You shall do no servile work therein. It shall be an everlasting ordinance in all your dwellings and generations," Levit. xxiii. 21. (3.) The feast of trumpets, in memory of the law being given to the people on Mount Sinai with thunder and lightning and the sound of trumpets. "The seventh month," says Almighty God, "on the first day of the month, you shall keep a Sabbath, a memorial, with the sound of trumpets, and it shall be called holy. You shall do no servile work therein, and you shall offer a holocaust to the Lord," Levit. xxiii. 24. See here how the word Sabbath is used for a holiday, as well as for the seventh day. (4.) The feast of atonement, which was instituted for expiating the sins of the people, by fasting and humiliation, and various kinds of sacrifices. "Upon the tenth day of the seventh month," says Almighty God, "shall

be the day of atonement: it shall be most solemn, and shall be called holy, and you shall afflict your souls on that day, and shall offer a holocaust to the Lord. You shall do no servile work in the time of this day, because it is a day of propitiation, that the Lord your God may be merciful to you. Every soul that is not afflicted on this day shall perish from among his people. You shall do no work therefore on that day; it shall be an everlasting ordinance to you, in all your generations and dwellings. It is a Sabbath-day of rest, and you shall afflict your souls," Levit. xxiii. 27. (5.) The feast of tabernacles, towards the end of September, when all the fruits of the earth were gathered in. It was instituted in memory of the particular protection of God over His people in the wilderness, when they dwelt in tents for forty years: "That your posterity may know," says Almighty God, "that I made the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt," Levit. xxiii. 43. This feast was kept with great solemnity and joy, and lasted for eight days, and "The first day," says the Scripture, "shall be called most solemn and most holy, and you shall do no servile work therein. And seven days you shall offer holocausts to the Lord. The eighth day also shall be most solemn and most holy, . . . you shall do no servile work therein," Levit. xxiii. 35. From which we see how strictly Almighty God requires His people to keep these holidays, both as to abstaining from work, and offering up sacrifices to Him; putting them upon the same footing with the Sabbath, or seventh day itself, and calling them by the same name of Sabbaths.

Q. 14. Were any other holidays instituted in after-times by the people of God, besides those ordained immediately by God Himself?

A. It was to preserve the memory of the great benefits God had bestowed upon His people, and to excite them to render to Him the tribute of gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving continually for these favours, that God Himself ordained the above holidays to be observed with so great solemnity. From the same principles, the rulers and people of the Jews, in after-times, when they had received other remarkable favours from God, instituted other holidays, to perpetuate the memory of them, and to praise and bless God for them. Thus, (1.) The feast of the dedication of the temple, which was instituted by Solomon, when the temple was first built by him in Jerusalem; as is related, 3 Kings, viii., and 2 Chron. vii. It was renewed again after the Babylonian captivity, when the temple was rebuilt; "And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of the house of God with joy," 1 Esdr. vi. 16. It was renewed also by Judas Maccabæus after the temple had been polluted by the heathens, and a new altar raised in it; "And they kept the dedication of the altar eight days, and they offered holocausts with joy, and sacrifices of salvation and of praise; . . . and Judas and his brethren, and all the church of Israel, decreed that the day of the dedication of the altar should be kept in its season, from year to year, for eight days, from the five-and-twentieth day of the month of Casleu, with joy and gladness," 1 Mac. iv. 56; that is, about the end of November. And this feast was still kept even in the time of our Saviour, who honoured it with His presence, for "it was the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem, and it was winter; and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch," John, x. 22. (2.) The feast of Judith, in memory of her victory over Holofernes; of which we are told, "The day of the fes-

tivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews in the number of holidays, and is religiously observed by the Jews from that time until this day," Judith, xvi. 31. (3.) The feast of Esther, in memory of the deliverance of the people of God from the destruction intended for them by Aman. For after that happy deliverance, Mardocai wrote the whole account of it, and sent it by letters to all the Jews, "both those that lay near, and those afar off, that they should receive the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar for holidays, and always at the return of the year should celebrate them with solemn honour. . . . .And the Jews undertook to observe with solemnity all that they had begun to do at that time, which Mardocai by letters had commanded to be done; . . . which the Jews took upon themselves and their seed, and upon all that had a mind to be joined to their religion; so that it should be lawful for none to pass these days without solemnity," Esth. ix. 20, 23, 27. These were three holidays instituted by the church of the Jews, and kept with great devotion, besides several others of less note. They were instituted in memory of temporal benefits received, and were figures of those more excellent holidays afterwards to be instituted in memory of the more important benefits which the Saviour of the world brought to all mankind. The holidays of the Jews ceased with the reprobation of that people, and gave place to those of the Christian Church, which they had prefigured.

Q. 15. What are the principal ends for which the Church of Christ has instituted holidays among her children?

A. For the same ends as the Sundays are kept holy; namely, (1.) To dedicate a further portion of our time to the service of God alone, that in them we may join

in praising and adoring God, and in rendering Him that homage which we owe to Him as our sovereign Lord. (2.) To have leisure from our worldly affairs, in order to apply more earnestly to the concerns of our souls. God takes to Himself, as is just, the glory of having these days dedicated to His service, but gives all the profit to us. (3.) To remind us of the great and ineffable mysteries of our redemption; the incarnation and birth of our Saviour, His sufferings, death, and resurrection, His glorious ascension into heaven, and the coming of His holy Spirit; to excite us to a proper sense of these inestimable effects of the love of God, and to render to Him the just tribute of thanksgiving, adoration, and praise. (4.) To honour God in His saints, and to be encouraged and assisted to follow their holy example. (5.) That those who, by their state of life, have little or no leisure to receive instruction in the great truths of their religion on other days, may on these solemnities acquire that necessary knowledge of them on which their salvation so much depends.

Q. 16. In what manner does the Church command these holidays to be kept?

A. In the same manner as we are commanded to keep the Sundays. Because, (1.) The ends for instituting them are the same, and therefore they are to be kept in the same manner. (2.) In the old law, God commanded the holidays to be kept in the same manner as the Sabbath; and as these were only figures of the Sundays and holidays of the new law, commemorating merely temporal benefits, how much more ought Christian festivals to be kept with devotion, since they are the substance of which the others were only figures, and are instituted to commemorate the great spiritual benefits of our redemption? Consequently, we are obliged to observe the holidays of the Church of

Christ, both by abstaining from all unnecessary servile work, by assisting at the holy sacrifice of the altar, and by spending them in such other religious exercises as may truly make them holy.

Q. 17. Is it a sin to break or profane these holidays?

A. Most undoubtedly; for, (1.) It is robbing God of that portion of our time which is set apart for His service by His own authority announced to us by His holy Church. (2.) It is always a source of scandal, both to the members of the Church and to those who are not of the Church, giving the latter cause to blaspheme our holy religion when they see us acting contrary to what we profess to be our duty. (3.) It is disobedience to the strict command of God's holy Church, of which Christ says, "He that hears you, hears Me; and he that despises you, despises Me:" and "He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." (4.) It is taking part with those wicked men, of whom the Scripture says, "They said in their hearts, the whole kindred of them together, Let us abolish all the festival days of God from the land," Ps. lxxiii. 8. (5.) It is depriving their own souls of those spiritual benefits for which these sacred solemnities are appointed.

Q. 18. But is it not hard on the people to lose the profit of their work on these days?

A. In answer to this, (1.) Is it not an infinitely greater loss to their souls to forfeit the grace and favour of God, by robbing Him of that portion of their time which He demands, and thereby bringing upon themselves the guilt of mortal sin? (2.) How many days and hours do they not throw away in sinful occupations, without any regret? Is it not a disgrace to Christians willingly to squander their time when serving the devil, and only to regret it

when it is spent in the service of God, and in the concerns of their salvation? (3.) Has not God a thousand ways to recompense them by blessing their affairs and causing them to prosper? And is it not a criminal distrust in His Divine Providence to imagine that He will allow us to suffer by attention to His service, especially as He has made such promises as we have seen above, of blessing our temporal affairs if we be careful to sanctify the days set apart for His service? (4.) Has He not threatened to punish in the severest manner those who profane His holidays? and will not the accomplishment of these threats be infinitely worse than the loss of the work of these days? (5.) Has He not ten thousand ways, unknown to us, both to fulfil His promises and to execute His threats? Where, then, is our faith, if we be deterred from doing our duty by such unchristian fears?

In the old law, God commanded that every seventh year should be a Sabbath of rest; "Six years shalt thou sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and shalt gather the fruits thereof; but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath to the land, thou shalt not sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard: what the ground shall bring forth of itself, thou shalt not reap; neither shalt thou gather the grapes of the first-fruits as a vintage; for it is a year of rest to the land," Levit. xxv. 3. And as God foresaw that such an objection might be made against this ordinance as is here proposed against keeping holidays, He anticipates and answers it: "But if you say, What shall we eat the seventh year, if we sow not, nor gather our fruits? I will give you My blessing the sixth year, and it shall yield the fruits of three years: And the eighth year you shall sow, and shall eat of the old fruits until the ninth year; till the new grow up, you shall eat the old store,"

ver. 20. How does this confound our want of confidence in our all-powerful God? How does it condemn our fears of injuring our temporal affairs by serving Him?

Q. 19. In what consists the duty of hearing mass on Sundays and holidays?

A. In two things; first, in being present during the time of the celebration of mass; and secondly, in assisting at it in a proper manner, that is, with attention and devotion. On each of these, the following things are to be remarked:—

(1.) With regard to being present, the command expressly obliges us to hear mass on Sundays and holidays. Now, to hear mass is to hear the whole mass, and consequently the command obliges all to be present at the celebration of that august sacrifice from the beginning to the end. Whoever is absent, therefore, from any portion of it, through his own fault, is guilty of a sin: and the sin will be the greater, the longer the time that he is absent. If he be absent during any one of the four principal parts, it is the same as to the obligation as if he had been absent during the whole; and he is bound to hear mass again that day, if he have the opportunity. To understand this, we must remember that the celebration of this holy sacrifice is divided into four parts; namely, The preparation of the people, which is from the beginning to the end of the Gospel: The preparation of the matter for the sacrifice; from the Gospel to the sanctus: The action of the sacrifice itself, from the sanctus to the pater noster: and the communion, from the pater noster to the end. Now, in order to fulfil the obligation of hearing mass, we must be present at all these four parts, as they are all necessary for the integrity of the sacrifice; and if a person should delay going to church

till the first part be ended, though he assist at all the other three, yet he cannot be said to have heard mass, nor to have fulfilled the obligation. If, indeed, this delay be owing to real necessity, and not to any fault of his, absence will not be imputed to him as a sin; and he will do well to make up for the omission by greater fervour during those parts at which he is present. But if his delay be owing to sloth or negligence, it will be a grievous sin, for which he must answer to God. This is particularly to be remembered by all who have but one opportunity of hearing mass: for if, through their own fault, they delay going to church till after mass has been begun, they are guilty before God. Their guilt is the greater, the farther the mass has been proceeded with; and if they delay till after the Gospel, they are not supposed to fulfil their obligation of hearing mass that day. The reason is, by such culpable absence they rob Almighty God of a part of that homage which He expressly requires of them; and the longer they are absent, the greater is the robbery; and if they be absent during the whole first part or preparation, they rob Him of the whole, as to the object of the command. Further, the Scripture says, "Before prayer, prepare thy soul; and be not as a man that tempteth God," Ecclus. xviii. 23. We see that even in our ordinary prayers it is tempting God to presume to approach Him, and to speak to His sovereign majesty, without certain preparation. On this ground the Church, from the very times of the apostles, directed by the Holy Ghost, considering that the holy sacrifice of the mass is the most sacred and divine homage that can possibly be offered by man to God, has ordained the first part to be a preparation of her children for celebrating it worthily. If, therefore, a person through his own fault absent himself from this preparation, he is

guilty of a grievous sin of presumption, besides that of disobedience to the command?

(2.) As to the manner of assisting at mass, we must do so with great attention and devotion; for if, in our ordinary prayers, attention and the fervour of devotion are necessary to render them acceptable to God, as we have seen, Chap. X., Q. 7, No. 10; how much more must they be required in assisting at the holy sacrifice, the most sacred and divine prayer we can offer to Almighty God? Besides, the offering of this holy sacrifice is the most perfect external act of supreme homage and adoration which can be given to God. Now, we have seen, Chap. X., Q. 10, that no external act of homage can be agreeable to Him unless it be accompanied with the internal homage and worship of the heart. If, therefore, we be present at the holy sacrifice, whilst our hearts are wilfully employed in worldly affairs, we offend God, instead of pleasing Him. Lastly, as this holy sacrifice is a memorial and mystical representation of the great mystery of our redemption, the passion and death of Jesus Christ, Who here offers Himself up in sacrifice to His eternal Father by the ministry of His priests, consider what a profanation it is of these divine mysteries, either to show carelessness or inattention in our outward behaviour, or to fail in internal respect and devotion on so sacred and solemn an occasion.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR AND OURSELVES.

Q. 1. WHY is this subject of charity, or the love of our neighbour, introduced here?

A. Because the following commandments regard principally the duties we owe to our neighbour; and St Paul says they "are all comprised in this word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," for which he immediately adds this reason, "The love of our neighbour worketh no evil;" and then concludes, "Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 9. For this reason, it is of great consequence to understand properly the nature and obligations of this love of our neighbour, as it is the foundation on which all the following commandments of the law of God rest.

SECTION I.

The Nature and Grounds of Charity towards our Neighbour.

Q. 2. What is properly meant by charity, or the love of our neighbour?

A. To understand this we must observe that love, taken in its general signification, is an affectionate inclination of the will towards the object we love, by which we wish its welfare, and desire to do it good. This definition is applicable to every kind of love. But the several kinds of love are distinguished from each other by the different motives from which our love arises, and the different kinds of good which we wish to its object. Hence we find the following principal kinds of love in the world: (1.) Natural love, which is implanted in us by nature itself, and arises from our intimate connection with those with whom we are united by the ties of blood; such is the love between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and others who are nearly related in consanguinity; and the goods which this love tends to procure for its object, are those which we think contribute to make us naturally happy, such as riches, honours, esteem, and other worldly enjoyments. This love is found in heathens as well as among Christians. It is found in a strong degree even in the brute creation. It does not depend, properly speaking, upon our own choice, nor is it an act of our free will, but is implanted in us by the Author of our nature, for the best of purposes; hence there is no merit in having it, but that man would be a monster who should be devoid of it. This is not the love of charity. (2.) Interested love: which arises from motives of worldly interest, and tends only to promote the worldly interest of its object: such is the love of neighbours; of the members of a society, formed for mutual support and advantage; and such in general is the love of all worldly friendships. This love is found not only among heathens, and those who know not God, but even among robbers and pirates: it is founded wholly in self-love, has no merit in the sight

of God, and is not the virtue of Christian charity. (3.) Carnal love: this is founded on the beauty of the human face and form, is found among all mankind, is one great source of the abominations of lust, and generally tends only to the gratification of that base passion. This, instead of being of any value in the sight of God, or agreeable to Him, is too often the origin of crimes which are most hateful and detestable to Him, and on this account it is far from being the love of charity. (4.) Rational love: arising from motives which reason approves; as virtuous dispositions, learning, prudence, valour, generosity, humanity, and the like. To this kind of love we are impelled by nature itself, and our moral sense approves it; but neither is this the love of charity, for it is found among the heathens themselves, and arises only from our natural sense of the beauty of virtue. (5.) The love of gratitude; that is, the grateful affection and goodwill which one has towards his benefactor: this is also a laudable disposition of the soul, and highly approved by our moral sense, but it is more a good natural disposition than a virtue of the free will; it is found not only in those who know not God, but even in the brute creation; and, therefore, neither is it the love of charity. (6.) Charity is the love we bear to our neighbour for God's sake; the motives on which it is founded proceed from God, are of a supernatural kind; and the goods which it wishes, and tends to procure, are principally such as concern eternal salvation.

Hence we see the great difference there is between the love of charity and those other kinds of love above mentioned; for, (1.) The motives on which all other kinds of love are founded, and from which they rise, are natural—that is, such as are competent to man, considered in his natural state as a human being, in which he

finds some natural pleasure or advantage, agreeable to his self-love, and which he perceives by his natural faculties, by his senses or reason : the motives on which the love of charity is founded are all supernatural, such as belong to man as a Christian, and which are made known to him by revelation. (2.) The welfare or happiness of the person we love, in those other kinds of love, is only such as belongs to the world; riches, pleasures, honour, power, and the like; and in these they rest as in their ultimate object. But the welfare or happiness of those we love by the love of charity is principally their eternal salvation, and other goods are regarded only with reference to this, and with subordination to it. Hence it appears that the love of charity which we bear towards our neighbour is a branch of the love of God; because by it we love our neighbour for God's sake, as a thing belonging to God, and connected with Him; and its whole tendency is to bring our neighbour to God, to whom he belongs. This is the reason why this love of our neighbour is called charity: because charity, properly speaking, in the language of Scripture, is the love of God; and when we love our neighbour for God's sake, we, in reality, love God in our neighbour, and therefore such love is really an exercise of our love to God, and an act of charity. Hence we may observe, that not every good we do to our neighbour is charity, but only such as we do for the sake of God, and in obedience to His will. And this is a most necessary observation in practice.

Q. 3. Is eternal salvation and the means to acquire it the only good which the love of charity wishes to our neighbour, and tends to procure for him?

A. To understand this, we must repeat what we have observed, Chap. IX. Q. 6, No. 4, "that such is the

natural disposition of our heart, that when we have a strong and tender affection for any one, our love is not confined to his person alone, but extends to everything belonging to him; our regard for him makes everything that is his dear to us;" and on this account we are not only ready to serve our friend in his own person, but in everything that is his, because it is his; and not only to preserve it for him, if it be in any danger, but also to assist it in any other way it may require, whether for relief, improvement, or happiness. In this manner we behave to our friend's children, his relations, his servants, his cattle, or his goods. Consequently, where one has a sincere love for God, this must necessarily show itself in loving everything that belongs to God; and especially our neighbour, who, of all creatures in this world, has the greatest relation and most intimate connection with Him. A love for our neighbour, then, flowing from this source, must impel us not only to wish and procure his eternal happiness as its principal and ultimate object, but also to wish, and endeavour to procure, his real welfare in every respect; especially when we consider that this is pleasing to God, and He expressly commands us to do so, as the strongest proof we can give of our love to Himself. Hence it appears that the love of charity towards our neighbour embraces all kinds of good in its wishes for his welfare; his eternal salvation as its principal object, and other goods as subservient and subordinate to it. And hence it appears that the other kinds of love, though they are very different from charity, may yet easily be raised to the high dignity of belonging to it; if our wishes for the respective goods they have in view be kept in due subordination to salvation, the means used to procure them be such as are consistent with the law of God,

and the motive be sanctified by a pure intention to please God.

Q. 4. What then are the motives, from the love of God, on which charity towards our neighbour is founded?

A. They are these following: (1.) He is a child of God by creation, and His adopted son by grace; "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God," 1 John, iii. 1. "In the fulness of time God sent His Son . . . that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 4. Hence in the Lord's Prayer we are commanded to address God as our Father; nay, our Saviour says in the Gospel, "Call none your father upon earth; for One is your Father, Who is in heaven," Mat. xxiii. 9, to show us that God is our Father, in a manner so much more perfect and excellent than man, that in comparison of Him no man deserves that name. (2.) In consequence of being a child of God, our neighbour is a brother of Jesus Christ, and as such all the members of His mystical body are acknowledged by Him; thus, "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father Who is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother," Mat. xii. 50. "And Jesus said to them" (the holy women who waited at the sepulchre), "Be not afraid; go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee; there they shall see Me," Mat. xxviii. 10. And to Mary Magdalen, on the same occasion, He said, "Go to My brethren and say to them, I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God," John, xx. 17. (3.) He is the picture of God, the work of His own hand, and created by Him

to His own image; for at the beginning God said, "Let us make man to our own image and likeness . . . and God created man to His own image; to the image of God He created him; male and female He created them," Gen. i. 29. (4.) He is a member of that mystical body of which Christ is the head, for "We being many are one body in Christ," Rom. xii. 5. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body; so also in Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body," 1 Cor. xii. 12. And, "all we, being many, are one body, who partake of that one bread," 1 Cor. x. 17. Now, "Christ is the head of the Church, He is the saviour of the body, Christ . . . (as head) cherisheth the Church (His body), for we are members of His body, and of His flesh, and of His bones," Eph. v. 23, 30. "For He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead," Colos. i. 18. (5.) He is highly esteemed and beloved by God and by Jesus Christ, Who have given him the most convincing proofs of their affection in the benefits and graces bestowed upon him, and in what Jesus Christ has done and suffered for his salvation; for he is redeemed by the blood of Jesus. (6.) He is made to be eternally happy with God in His kingdom, of which he is an heir; for "The Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God; and if sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ," Rom. viii. 16. These relations to God chiefly apply to our Christian brethren, but even those who are not Christians partake of several of them; for they are children of God by creation, and capable of becoming so by grace; they are the work of His hands, redeemed by the blood of Christ, made to be eternally happy with Him, and capable

of being brought to the actual possession of that happiness.

Now each of those connections which our neighbour has with God, contains a powerful argument to excite in our hearts an ardent love for him, and cannot fail to do so if we have any real love for God in our soul. For how is it possible to have a sincere love for God and for Jesus Christ, and not have the same for our neighbour, who is so nearly connected with them, is so highly prized and esteemed by them, and for whom they have such an ardent love, that God the Son died on a cross for his salvation? On this so natural and necessary a connection between our love for God and our love for our neighbour, the beloved disciple argues in this manner: "Dearly beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God . . . in this is charity; not as though we had loved God, but because He first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. My dearest, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another; . . . if we love one another, God abideth in us, and His charity is perfected in us. . . . Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us: if any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?" John, iv. 7, 10, 19. And how can we pretend to love the Father, if we hate His Son? "Have we not all one Father?" says the prophet: "hath not one God created us? why then doth every one of us despise his brother?" Mal. ii. 10. And St John lays down this general rule, "Every one that loveth Him that begot, loveth him also who is born of Him," 1 John, v. 1; or how can we pretend to love the head, if we hate the members? to esteem the original, when we despise

the picture? or to have any regard for our friend, while we hate those whom he loves?

II. The second grand motive to love our neighbour is, because God, whom we love, expressly commands it, not only as a duty which He requires, but as a proof of our love to Him. We have seen, Chap. IX. Q. 5, No. 2, that one of the principal duties which flows from the love of God is obedience to His holy commandments, and the sacred Scripture places the very essence of divine charity in it. "This is the charity of God," says St John, "that we keep His commandments," 1 John, v. 3; and, "This commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother," 1 John, iv. 21. Now this command He lays down in many different places, and in the strongest terms. (1.) Our Saviour declares that the command of loving God is the first and greatest command, "and the second," says He, "is like to this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and then, to show the great importance of these two commands, He assures us that on them "dependeth the whole law and the prophets," Mat. xxii. 37. (2.) He enforces our observance of this command by all our love to Him, and by all that He is to us: "This is my commandment," says He, "that you love one another, as I have loved you," John, xv. 12. If you have any love for me, any gratitude for all that I have done for you, show it, in obeying these my orders of loving one another; consider it as my commandment, who am your Redeemer, and give proof of your love to me by obeying it. (3.) He declares that He lays it upon us to serve as a sign to the world that we belong to Him, and that it is the proper characteristic of His disciples: "I give you a new commandment," "that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know

that you are my disciples, if you love one another," John, xiii. 34. (4.) He prays to His heavenly Father to bestow this brotherly love upon all His followers, as a proof to the world that He Himself was sent by the Father as the Messias: "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given to Me, that they may be one as We also are. . . . And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me," John, xvii. 11, 20. (5.) He declares He will not accept of a gift from our hand, unless we be in charity with our brother: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift," Mat. v. 23. (6.) The same important duty is inculcated by the apostles, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and delivered Himself for us," Eph. v. 1. "Above all those things have charity, which is the bond of perfection," Col. iii. 14. "Purifying your souls in the obedience of charity; with a brotherly love, from a sincere heart, love one another earnestly," 1 Pet. i. 22. "Before all things, have a constant mutual charity among yourselves," 1 Pet. iv. 8.

III. A third most powerful motive to the faithful observance of this duty is the declaration which Jesus Christ makes, that He considers everything we do to our neighbour as done to His own person; He looks on all as His brethren, as members of the body of which He is the head. Every one naturally thinks himself deeply concerned in whatever is done to his brother, nor is it

possible to do anything to any member of our body without the head partaking of it; so Jesus Christ expressly declares that whatever good we do "to one of these His least brethren, we do it to Him;" and whatever good we refuse to "do to one of these least ones, we do it not to Him," Mat. xxv. 40, 45. On the same grounds it follows, that whatever ill we do to the least of His brethren, He will also esteem as done to Himself. This truth He before declared by His prophet, saying to His people, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of My eye," Zach. ii. 8. Now the circumstances in which our blessed Saviour made the above declaration are particularly to be remarked; for He did it when giving a most awful account of the general judgment, and declares that the sentence of eternal bliss will be passed on the good, as a reward for the acts of charity and mercy which they have done to His brethren, because He considers them all as done to Himself; and that the sentence of eternal reprobation will be passed on the wicked, in punishment of their having omitted to serve Him in the persons of His brethren, by neglecting to exercise the acts of charity and mercy towards them which they stood in need of. This shows that he not only considers what we do to our neighbour as done to Himself, but also that He will most strictly reward or punish us accordingly. This He has also expressly declared in several other parts of Scripture; "He that oppresseth the poor, upbraideth His Maker; but he that hath pity on the poor honoureth Him," Prov. xiv. 31. "He that despiseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker; and he that rejoiceth at another man's ruin, shall not be unpunished," Prov. xvii. 5. "He that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and He will repay him," Prov. xix. 17. "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only

in the name of a disciple, Amen I say unto you, He shall not lose his reward," Mat. x. 42. "For God is not unjust, that He should forget your work, and the love you have shown in His name; you who have ministered and do minister unto the saints," Heb. vi. 16. From this it follows, (1.) That the love we owe to our neighbours obliges us to wish and do them every kind of good they may stand in need of, which we would wish and do to Jesus Christ Himself, were He in their place. (2.) That it obliges us never to reflect on what our neighbour may be in himself, whether agreeable or disagreeable in our eyes, our friend or enemy, deserving or undeserving; but only to consider his present need of our assistance, and that what we do to him, Christ will consider as done to Himself; observe His own words, "the least of these my brethren." And the reason is, because in Christ there is no distinction of persons; we are all His members and His brethren: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free," 1 Cor. xii. 13. And therefore in Christ, "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus," Gal. iii. 28. Or as the same apostle expresseth it in another place, "Where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian or Scythian, bond or free; but Christ is all, and in all," Col. iii. 11. From the same principle it follows, (3.) That it is only in loving and doing good to our fellow-creatures that we can do any essential service to our blessed Saviour. For in any good we do, which is directed immediately to Jesus Christ in His own person, such as making acts of love, of praise, or adoration, what profit is it to Him? It adds nothing to His essential happiness, nor would the want of it diminish

one iota of His bliss; but when we do good to our neighbour, we do a real service to Jesus Christ, because we do a service to His members, and help and assist His brethren. Hence He gave His sanction to what a pious person said, that "To love one's neighbour as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices," Mark, xii. 33. And He declares again and again in His gospel, what He had said by His prophet, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," Mat. ix. 13; Mark, xii. 7.

IV. A fourth motive to the love of our neighbour is the very spirit and nature of the Christian religion, to which we are called, and of which we are members. St Paul lays particular stress upon this motive, and uses it with earnestness to enforce the observance of this duty. "I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called, with all humility and mildness, with patience supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." In these words he lays down the practice of charity towards our neighbour, as the walking worthy of our vocation, worthy of the name of a Christian, worthy of the religion we profess; and he immediately subjoins the reason that it is so, showing that everything in this religion tends to union and love among its followers. "One body, and one spirit," says he, "as you are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in us all," Eph. iv. 1. Every one of which considerations affords a most powerful motive to brotherly love and unity; and the same argument is used by the prophet Malachy to show how shameful it is for those who are united by so many sacred ties to live in discord

and animosity among themselves. "Have we not all one Father?" says this prophet. "Hath not one God created us? Why then doth every one of us despise his brother, violating the covenant of our fathers?" Mal. ii. 10. Our Saviour also says: "One is your Master, and all you are brethren; . . . and one is your Father Who is in heaven; . . . one is your Master, Christ," Mat. xxiii. 8. And on this account the consideration of our being brethren is frequently used in Scripture to enforce our loving one another. Thus, "Let love be without dissimulation, . . . loving one another with a brotherly love," Rom. xii. 9. "As touching the charity of brotherhood, we have no need to write to you; for yourselves have learned of God to love one another. For indeed you do it towards all the brethren in all Macedonia; but we entreat you, brethren, that you abound more," 1 Thess. iv. 9, "Let fraternal charity abide in you: and do not forget hospitality; for by this some, being not aware of it, have entertained angels; . . . and do not forget to do good and to impart; for by such sacrifices God's favour is obtained," Heb. xiii. 1, 16. "And," finally says St Peter, "be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, being lovers of the brotherhood, merciful, modest, humble; not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: for to this you are called, that you may inherit a blessing," 1 Pet. iii. 8.

V. A fifth motive to the love of our neighbour is taken from the excellence of this holy virtue, and the great benefits that flow from it to our own souls, as declared in Scripture. (1.) It is a most powerful means to obtain mercy from God, and pardon of our own sins; hence, "Before all things," says St Peter, "have a constant mutual charity among yourselves; for charity

covereth a multitude of sins," 1 Pet. iv. 8. And this it doth, both by preventing many sins which are committed where charity is wanting, and also by moving God to show to us the same mercy and love that we show to our neighbour—according to the law He has established of treating us as we treat others. "Take heed what you hear," says our blessed Saviour, showing by this introduction the importance of what He is going to say. "Take heed what you hear; with what measure you shall mete, it shall be measured to you again," Mark, iv. 24. And in St Luke, descending to particulars, He says: "Judge not, and you shall not be judged; condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall mete withal it shall be measured to you again," Luke, vi. 37. So also He says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," Mat. v. 7. But His apostle adds, "Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy," Jas. ii. 13. From which it appears that Almighty God has put it in a manner into our own hands to obtain from Him what treatment we please, by treating Him in the persons of our neighbours as we wish He should treat us. (2.) It implants in the soul a multitude of noble virtues, with which it is always accompanied, and which never fail to render a person beloved by all who know him. St Paul thus describes them: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all

things, endureth all things," 1 Cor. xiii. 4. (3.) The faithful observance of this duty is the fulfilling of the whole law; for "Thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment it is comprised in this word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The love of our neighbour worketh no evil. Love therefore is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 9. Again he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ," Gal. vi. 2. And "by charity of the spirit, serve one another; for all the law is fulfilled in one word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Gal. v. 13. And indeed the very nature of love shows the same truth, for to love is to wish well, to do good, and to do no ill to the person we love; and what is this but to fulfil all the duties towards others which are contained in the law? (4.) It is the life of the soul, and that for several reasons; for where the love of our neighbour reigns, there the grace of God reigns—God Himself; for "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His charity is perfected in us. . . . God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him," 1 John, iv. 12, 16. Besides, as we have seen above, it roots out sin, which is the death of the soul; and it plants all virtues, which are the fruits of life. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." "He that loveth not, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer hath life eternal abiding in himself," 1 John, iii. 14. (5.) It is the light of the soul. The principal cause that leads us on in sin, without knowing whither we are going, is our self-love, which blinds us; for it causes us to make an idol of ourselves,

and to have no other view than to please ourselves, and satisfy our own will. But when the holy virtue of charity takes possession of our soul, it makes us forget ourselves, and our own sensual and worldly interest, in order to promote the interest of Jesus Christ by serving Him in His brethren and members; and thus, when our mind is delivered from the dark clouds and mists of our passions and self-love, the grace of God shines clearly in the soul, and His heavenly wisdom points out to her the steps she ought to take in order to please Him: "He that saith he is in light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no scandal in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes," 1 John, ii. 9. (6.) "Charity," St Paul assures, "never falleth away," 1 Cor. xiii. 8, because the motives on which it is founded are always the same. All the other kinds of love above mentioned, Q. 2, are founded only on natural or worldly motives, which are perishable, and liable to be diminished by various accidents; and when these motives fail, our love also, founded on them, must fail; but when we love our neighbour purely for God's sake, nothing is capable of altering it, for whatever change may happen in the person of our neighbour, or in his dispositions towards us—though he should become our enemy, do us every kind of evil—still his relation to God remains the same—still he is a child of God, created to His image, redeemed by the blood of Jesus, a member of His mystical body; and what is more still, God commands us to love Him. If our love be founded purely on these motives, it must remain entire, however he may be affected towards us: and the love of charity

shines forth in its brightest splendour when it is exercised towards our enemies.

Section II.

The Love of our Enemies.

Q. 5. What is meant by the love of our enemies?

A. The love of our neighbour, if founded on the natural or worldly motives above mentioned, Q. 2, is merely a natural love, to which nature itself inclines us, and to which even our self-love impels us, because it finds its own satisfaction, interest, or pleasure in it. Hence all such love, considered in itself, has no merit in the sight of God, so as to conduce in any degree to our salvation. It is found in the most vicious, even in the brute creation; and therefore our Saviour says, "If you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens the same?" Mat. v. 46. And though this natural love may be elevated to become a branch of Christian charity, when we perform the lawful duties belonging to it, from motives of the love of God, yet such is the propensity of our nature to the exercise of such love, that it is difficult to abstract our will entirely from the impulses of nature, and to practise the duties of it purely for God's sake. But when the question is of loving our enemies—that is, such as are disagreeable to us, offend us, injure us, actually hate and wish us ill—nature and self-love are so far from inclining us to love them, that they inspire us with repugnance; they recoil, they start back at the thought of it; and the great difficulty we find in loving

our enemies arises from the opposition and aversion of nature and self-love. Hence, then, the love of our enemies is a supernatural virtue; not only because it is founded in the supernatural motive of the love of God, but also because it is repugnant to nature, subversive of all the inclinations of nature, far above all the strength of nature, and cannot be practised without a particular assistance of the grace of God. But for this very reason, it is the noblest and most God-like part of the love of our neighbour, the distinguishing character of a true Christian; one of the brightest ornaments of the soul in the sight of God, and of all acts of charity the most profitable and advantageous to those who practise it. Therefore our blessed Saviour, being solicitous that His followers should not misunderstand Him on so important a duty, is exceedingly clear and precise upon it, and has left us the most persuasive motives to observe it faithfully. In His instructions He descends to particulars, and not only forbids us to seek revenge, but commands us to pardon from our heart and to do good to those who injure us.

Q. 6. What are the particular motives for the love of our enemies?

A. The motives above mentioned for the love of our neighbour in general, include our enemies as well as others. They include all mankind without exception, because all are the creatures of God, His children by creation, made to His image, redeemed by the blood of Christ, beloved by Him, and created to be eternally happy with Him. They embrace even those who are enemies to God by sin; and if we are obliged by the general law of charity to love even those who are enemies to God, much more are we obliged to love those who offend us. Besides, our Saviour has laid down the follow-

ing strong inducements to love our enemies: (1.) He expressly commands it. "You have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy; but I SAY TO YOU, love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you," Mat. v. 43. To which is added in St Luke, "and bless them that curse you," Luke, vi. 28. Now in this command observe how strongly it is expressed; *I say to you*—I, Who am your God, your Redeemer, your Master, *I say to you;* this is My express order; this is My command to you, My disciples, to you and to all who wish to belong to Me. Observe also how He descends to the particular manner in which He wills this His command should be obeyed, and leaves no room for evasion or false interpretations. To enforce the perfect observance of it, (2.) He proposes His own example: "This is My command, that you love one another, as I have loved you," John, xv. 12. Now this is the high perfection of His love to us, that He loved us even when we were His declared enemies by sin, and to such a degree as to lay down His life for us. "God commendeth His charity towards us, because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. "In this is charity; not as though we had loved God, but because He first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. My dearest, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another," 1 John, iv. 10. Besides this general example of His love to His enemies, he also gave us several particular instances of it: He admitted the treacherous kiss from Judas, and spoke to him with the affection of a friend, even when in the very act of betraying Him: He miraculously healed the servant's ear, which had been cut off, even though he was among His enemies; and

when hanging on the cross in the greatest torment, insulted and mocked by His furious persecutors, He prayed for them to His Father, and excused them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." To this He adds, (3.) The example of His heavenly Father, and assures us that it is by imitating Him in this virtue we are in a special manner His children: "But I say to you, love your enemies, . . . that you may be the children of your Father, Who is in heaven; Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust," Mat. v. 45. "But love ye your enemies, . . . and you shall be the sons of the Highest, for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil," Luke, iv. 35. Observe how differently our Saviour speaks when recommending to us the love of our brethren in general, and the love of our enemies; He gives the first as the distinctive character of being His disciples: "In this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another;" but when He speaks of the love of our enemies as being the most God-like exercise of charity, He declares that it makes us become children of the most high God. "Love your enemies, . . . and you shall be the Highest;" showing by these different expressions, that as the dignity of sons is more excellent than that of disciples, so the love of our enemies far transcends every other branch of the love of our neighbour.

(4.) He makes the forgiving of all injuries done to us an express condition of obtaining pardon of our sins from God. He proposes to us the parable of the ten thousand talents, in which, after declaring that when the servant refused to forgive a trifling debt to his fellow-servant though his lord had forgiven him an enormous sum, his lord, hearing this, condemned his conduct,

"and delivered him to the torturers, till he should pay all the debt," He concludes thus, "So also shall My heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts," Mat. xviii. 35. To render us sensible and mindful of this, He teaches us to use in our daily prayer the petition, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" which no man can say who keeps malice in his heart against his enemy, without praying for his own condemnation. And immediately after teaching us that Divine prayer, He gives the reason for inserting this petition; "For if you forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your offences," Mat. vi. 14. Here we see it is a fixed law, decreed by God, that "Either we must from our hearts forgive our enemies, or God will never forgive us." St Paul inculcates this motive in these words, "Be ye kind one to another, merciful, forgiving one another, even as God hath forgiven you in Christ," Eph. iv. 32. And again, "Put ye on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience; bearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against one another; even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also," Col. iii. 12. The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the wise man, makes use of the same argument in the following striking terms, expressing surprise that any one who refuses to forgive his neighbour should dare to expect mercy from God: "He that seeketh to revenge himself shall find vengeance from the Lord, and He will surely keep his sins in remembrance. Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee, and then shall thy sins be forgiven thee when thou prayest. One man keepeth anger against another,

and doth he seek to be healed by God? He hath no mercy on a man like himself, and doth he entreat for his own sins? He that is but flesh nourisheth anger, and doth he ask forgiveness of God? Who shall obtain pardon for his sins?" Thus speaks the Spirit of God, and from this most just reasoning, concludes with the three following important advices: "Remember thy last things, and let enmity cease. . . . Remember the fear of God, and be not angry with thy neighbour. Remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the ignorance of thy neighbour," Eccles. xxviii. 1. These advices contain three most powerful helps, to assist us in this virtue of forgiving our enemies—namely, the remembrance of our last things; the remembrance of the fear of God, how stupendous His power, how dreadful His anger, how fearful it is to fall into His hands; and the remembrance of the covenant of the Most High,—that is, of the fixed law which He has made with man, that as we treat our neighbour, so He will treat us.

To these powerful motives is added, (5.) The command, repeated in different parts of Scripture, of never seeking revenge, nor returning evil for evil, but of repaying evil with good. Thus, "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals on his head, and the Lord will reward thee," Prov. xxv. 21. Because, by so doing, you will mitigate his mind, and make him your friend; for "A mild answer breaketh wrath, but a harsh word stirreth up fury," Prov. xv. 1. Also, "By patience a prince shall be appeased, and a soft tongue shall break hardness," Prov. xxv. 15. And by this means you will contribute to his salvation, inasmuch as you use the proper remedies to cure him of the hatred he has against

you, by continuing in which he would ruin his soul. God gave this commandment also in the old law; "If thou meet thy enemy's ox or ass going astray, bring it back to him. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lie underneath his burden, thou shalt not pass by, but shalt lift him up with it," Exod. xxiii. 4. "When thy enemy shall fall, be not glad; and in his ruin let not thy heart rejoice; lest the Lord see, and it displease Him," Prov. xxvi. 17. And in the New Testament, "Bless them that persecute you," says St Paul, "bless, and curse not; . . . render to no man evil for evil; . . . if it be possible, as much as in you, have peace with all men. Revenge not yourselves, my dearly beloved, but give place to wrath, for it is written, Revenge is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord: but if thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him to drink, for doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good," Rom. xii. 14, 17, 18. "See that none render evil for evil to any man, but ever follow that which is good towards each other, and towards all men," 1 Thess. v. 15. "Not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; for unto this you are called, that you may inherit a blessing," 1 Pet. iii. 9. Hence we find, (6.) Dreadful threats in Scripture against those who keep up anger and the spirit of revenge against their neighbour; thus, "Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy," James, ii. 13. And Jacob, upon his deathbed, foretelling the future fate of his children by the spirit of prophecy, said of Simeon and Levi, "Cursed be their fury, because it was stubborn; and their wrath, because it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and will scatter them in Israel," Gen. xlix. 7. "Thus saith the Lord, for three crimes of Edom, and for four, and I

will not convert him; because he has pursued his brother with the sword, and hath cast off all pity; and hath carried on his fury, and hath kept his wrath to the end," Amos, i. 11. The reason is, because God is the great Judge of the earth; He only knows what every one deserves, and has reserved to Himself the power of vengeance, as St Paul declares. Hence, whoever wishes to revenge himself, usurps a power which belongs only to God, besides acting contrary to all the duties of charity: "Say not, I will return evil; wait for the Lord, and He will deliver thee," Prov. xx. 22.

From this it is manifest that we are more strictly commanded to love our brethren, whom we commonly call enemies, than those who have never injured us. (1.) All the motives for loving our neighbour in general equally embrace all mankind, whether friends or enemies, and consequently our obligation in that respect to love both is equal; (2.) Besides these common motives, we have also the above special reasons to love our enemies in particular. These are too clear to admit evasion, and show the folly of the pretexts brought by our self-love and pride, to palliate our too frequent transgression of this sacred duty.

Q. 7. From whence arises the great difficulty we experience in obeying this sacred command of loving our enemies?

A. It arises principally from three causes, the removal of which is the best means to remove the difficulty, and to render this duty in its highest perfection easy. These causes are the delusions under which all mankind, more or less, labour from self-love and the corruption of our nature by sin; and they are the more dangerous as we are pleased with our delusion, and unwilling to be undeceived, even when our judgment is convinced of its

mistake. These delusions, which cause our difficulty in loving our enemies, are as follow :—

(1.) The attachment of our self-love to the enjoyments of this life, to ease, health, pleasure, riches, reputation, and the like. We look upon these things as real goods, and their contraries as real evils. We are born with an innate bent of the soul towards happiness, and an aversion to suffering; and from the pleasure our nature finds in the enjoyment of worldly goods, we fondly imagine that happiness is only to be found in the possession of them; but how false and unjust our judgments are in thinking so, we have seen, Chap. IV. In consequence of this mistaken judgment, which all have in some degree, of what are real goods or real evils, we grasp at the enjoyments of this life, and seek to escape its sufferings. Hence, when we are deprived of worldly goods, we consider it a misfortune, a real injury; we are pained in mind, and conceive an aversion against those whom we consider the cause. Reasons of justice, prudence, self-preservation, and other plausible pretexts, seem to justify our endeavouring to secure to ourselves that in which we place our happiness. We not only conceive an aversion and hatred to those who thus injure us, but we even applaud ourselves as acting reasonably in pursuing them with vengeance, both as a just punishment for the past, and a protection for the future. But it is evident that if we sought our happiness, not in the enjoyments of this life, but only in God, as the whole tenor and spirit of our holy religion require, our sentiments would be different. If "our affections were set on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth," Col. iii. 2; if, with St Paul, we "counted all things but as dung, that we might gain Christ," Phil. iii. 8; if we were ready to

leave possessions, and parents, and children, and all we have in this world, for the sake of Christ, and even to lose our life itself, rather than to lose Him; if, in a word, we had so little esteem or attachment to the present life, that "we used this world as though we used it not," 1 Cor. vii. 31; it is manifest that, when deprived of its goods, or exposed to its evils, we would feel no concern. We would think it no offence, nor look on it as any injury; on the contrary, considering the great advantages we might gain if we made a Christian use of such trials, we would esteem them rather a service done us than an injury. We would conceive no hatred or aversion against those who deprived us of these goods, nor in any degree esteem them as enemies; but would, without difficulty, preserve the same love and affection for them as for others. Do we ever count a man our enemy, or conceive a hatred against him, who takes a handful of sand from our field? Certainly not: but we would look on him as an enemy indeed who should take a handful of our gold. Whence is the difference? We highly esteem and are strongly attached to the gold, and therefore the loss of it pains us; we undervalue the sand, we have no attachment to it, and therefore it gives us no concern to be deprived of it. But did we consider both in the same light, the effects produced would be the same. Examples of the truth of this are not wanting in the Church of Christ. The apostles, when imprisoned and scourged, instead of seeking revenge on their persecutors, rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer ignominy for the sake of Christ. The Scripture gives this account of the first Christians: "The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were common to them," Acts,

iv. 32. St Paul gives this testimony of those to whom he wrote one of his epistles: "You both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took with joy the being stripped of your own goods, knowing that you have a better and a lasting substance," Heb. x. 34. And the innumerable armies of martyrs not only suffered the loss of everything dear to human nature, but laid down their lives in the midst of the most cruel torments, without showing the least resentment against their barbarous persecutors; nay, they behaved towards them with the most heroic charity and affection. To arrive at so perfect a detachment from the world is a very high degree of perfection, and not to be looked for in ordinary Christians; yet the reflection that the injuries we receive from our neighbours appear to us in so strong a light, only on account of our inordinate attachment to this world, the violence of our pride and self-love, and the corruption of our nature; and that they are far from being such, if considered by the light of faith; this reflection, I say, if properly attended to, would be a strong preservative against the aversion and hatred we too commonly conceive for those who occasion them, and a powerful means to enable us to preserve that charity and love towards them which is so strongly enjoined by the law of Jesus Christ. And if, as our Saviour strictly requires of all His followers, we study in earnest to mortify our self-love, and to break the unhappy attachment we have to this world, the more we shall advance in this holy exercise, the less difficulty shall we find in bearing the greatest injuries with patience, and in preserving a true Christian charity and love for those who occasion them.

(2.) Another mistake which deludes us is the idea that our neighbour, who occasions any affliction to us,

is the source and cause of what we suffer. With this prepossession we attribute our sufferings to his mistake, carelessness, malice, or ill-will against us; and whilst we see nothing in these dispositions of his mind towards us but what is odious and criminal, we naturally conceive hatred and ill-will against him. This is a delusion no less unjust than fatal; for our holy faith assures us that every cross, trouble, and affliction, and whatever be the immediate occasion of it, come originally from the express will and decree of God, our sovereign Lord and Master, and that our neighbour who occasions it is nothing more than the mere instrument for executing what He has expressly willed and decreed to send upon us from all eternity. It is true our neighbour who injures us commits a sin by which God is offended, and this sin, which resides precisely in the malice of his will, God only permits; but the effects of this sin, in what we suffer, are no less directly willed and decreed by Almighty God than any other natural event, as the motion of the earth or the course of the heavenly bodies. To explain this by a convincing example: Almighty God, out of infinite love to man, had decreed from eternity that our Saviour Jesus Christ should suffer the torments of His passion, and die upon the cross for our salvation. This design He could have executed in various ways, but foreseeing the wickedness of the Jews, He was pleased to make use of their malice for carrying out His decrees. Their sin was an instrument in His hand. This St Peter declares to the Jews in his first sermon to them: "This Jesus, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain," Acts, ii. 23. Afterwards the other disciples assembled together with one voice declared the same truth in stronger terms:

"O Lord, . . . of a truth there assembled together in this city against the holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and people of Israel, to do what Thy hand and counsel had decreed to be done," Acts, iv. 27. Now this is precisely the case with us in the crosses and trials of life. Almighty God from eternity foresees them with every circumstance, and His hand and counsel decree to send them upon us in time. This decree He could execute in different ways; but foreseeing that our neighbour would, if permitted, consent to do an unjust action which would accomplish His divine will, through His incomprehensible judgments He makes use of his sin to send the trial which He had resolved to inflict upon us.

Here, then, we see that to imagine that our neighbour is the cause of our sufferings is a miserable delusion. It is unjust and foolish to attribute them to his negligence, malice, or ill-will, or to conceive aversion or hatred against him on that account. Does a parent attribute the loss of his child to the sword that is the immediate instrument of death? Does a sick person attribute the pain he feels in an operation to the surgeon's knife? Would he not be thought to have lost his reason if he did? The sword and knife are but instruments; the hand that uses them is the cause of what is done. So it is in our case. Our neighbour who injures us is only the instrument in the hand of God, but God Himself is the cause of all we suffer. He uses the instrument as He pleases, and regulates every word our neighbour speaks, and everything he does, with such precision that he cannot touch a hair of our head, nor do us the smallest injury, further than God from eternity has decreed to permit. Hence the Scripture expressly declares that "Good things and evil, life and death,

poverty and riches, are from God," Ecclus. xi. 14. And "Shall there be evil in a city," says the prophet, "which the Lord hath not done?" Amos, iii. 6. Whatever be the immediate occasions or secondary causes by which these things are brought about, they are the instruments by which God's eternal decrees are accomplished.

Did we seriously reflect on these truths, and receive the trials caused to us by others as coming expressly from the hand of God; did we consider our neighbour who occasions them in no other light than as the instrument which God makes use of for executing His holy will, who would dare to complain? Who would consider what he suffers an injury? Who would think himself unjustly dealt with? It was thus all the saints of God acted; in this they found peace of mind amidst the severest trials, and by this means they preserved in their hearts love and charity for their greatest persecutors. This is the great lesson which Jesus Christ Himself taught all His followers, and left recorded for our instruction in His sacred gospel: for when He was taken prisoner in the garden, and St Peter drew his sword to defend Him, He said to Peter, "Put up your sword into the scabbard. The cup that My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" John, xviii. 11. He does not attribute the cup of His passion to the malice of the Jews, or to the cruelty of the soldiers. He knew these were only the instruments in the hand of His Father, and considering it wholly as His decree, receives it from His hand. See above, Chap. II. sect. 3, and in particular Q. 19. Let us therefore follow this divine example. Let us be firmly persuaded that God is the author of every trial that comes upon us; that He has decreed it from eternity, and that our

neighbour who injures us is nothing more than the instrument for executing the eternal decrees of God in our regard. Now what matters it whether He is pleased to use inanimate and irrational creatures or the malice of our neighbours for that purpose? This does not change our suffering, nor make the trial less beneficial to our soul. Their malice, considered in itself, can injure only their own souls, and the effects on us are the same as if they came from other creatures. It is the eternal will of God that we should suffer them, and therefore suffer them we must, whatever be the instrument He is pleased to use. Let us therefore be persuaded of these truths, and we shall find the love of our enemies far less difficult than we imagine, especially if we reflect that our sufferings and trials are not only expressly sent by the hand of God, but are the effects of His paternal goodness, intended as efficacious means for procuring many blessings to our souls, and effectually securing our eternal salvation, as we have seen, Chap. IV. Q. 10.

(3.) Another common delusion is our mistaken idea that our neighbour, who injures us, is our enemy. This is an idea so shocking to our self-love, and so contrary to our unhappy attachment to the esteem and love of others, that it divests him in our eyes of every title or claim to pity or compassion, and represents him only as a just object of aversion and indignation. But this is no less unjust than the former. For on what grounds can we regard him as our enemy? This must be either on account of his ill-will, or of its effects in the sufferings it occasions to us. Do we then consider him our enemy, because he occasions the cross that comes upon us? In this light he is nothing but the instrument in the hand of God. This cross we must suffer, because God

has so decreed; if we did not suffer it by means of our neighbour, we would have to undergo it from some other cause; but because God is pleased to make use of our neighbour's ill-will as His instrument, shall we therefore regard him as our enemy? How unjust is such a conclusion! Does the poor criminal look on the executioner as his enemy, because he executes the just sentence pronounced against him by the judge? Or would we look on an angel as our enemy, if God should send one of these heavenly spirits to do what is done against us by our neighbour? Or does a sick person consider the apothecary as his enemy, because he gives him a bitter potion to drink by the physician's prescription? On the contrary, he receives it from the apothecary's hand, and readily drinks it, from the hope that it will restore his health. Is not this precisely our case? Almighty God, like a wise and skilful physician, prescribes a severe cross for us, as a salutary though bitter medicine for the health of our soul; our neighbour is employed by our heavenly physician to prepare and present the potion to us; and shall we consider him our enemy, and hate him on that account? How unjust, how unreasonable would not this be? On the contrary, every motive of religion obliges us to look upon him as a real friend, considering the benefits which God intends us to draw from his actions. What our mistaken self-love calls an injury, an insult, is, in the eyes of religion, a seed of life, if we use it properly; for by it we may discharge the heavy debt of punishment we owe to the Divine justice; by it we can dispose our offended God to grant us pardon and mercy for our sins; by it we may gain a victory over self-love, that mortal enemy of our souls: in it we have an effectual means of acquiring humility, meekness, patience, resignation,—those darling

virtues of Jesus Christ,—and of practising that Godlike virtue of brotherly love in its highest perfection; by it we may increase our merit in the sight of God, and lay up a reward for our souls in heaven. These are the sublime effects of the crosses and trials that God sends us by the hand of our neighbour. It is with a view to produce these effects that He sends them; and shall we look on him as an enemy, and not rather as our friend, whom the Divine Providence employs for such a salutary purpose? With as little reason can we deem him our enemy, on account of the malice of his heart against us. For let us suppose he has a malice as enraged as the devil himself, if Almighty God does not think proper to use this malice as an instrument to execute His will, what harm can it do us? Not so much as to touch a hair of our head; for "not a hair of our head shall fall to the ground without our heavenly Father." Had not the devil an inveterate malice against Job? but how was Job hurt by it? Till Almighty God was pleased to make use of Satan's malice to try Job, he could not do him the smallest injury. Let therefore our neighbour rage against us as he pleases, whom does he hurt by so doing? Not us, even in the smallest degree—consequently we cannot in reason consider him our enemy; but he grievously injures himself, he offends God, and wounds his own soul, and therefore is a real enemy to himself, but by no means to us. In this light, then, instead of being an object of our anger and aversion, whoever injures us is a real object of pity and compassion; for if we have any love for God, zeal for His glory, or desire for the salvation of souls, how can we fail to be moved with pity and compassion to see our brother, for whom Jesus Christ died, offending God in so grievous a manner, and plunging himself into the abyss of mortal sin, by his hatred to us; especially if we have

had the misfortune, even undesignedly, to give him any cause? What diligence and care ought we not to use to deliver a poor soul from such misery? What tenderness and compassion ought we not to show, in order to mitigate his wrath, and extricate him from the jaws of Satan? This is charity; this is to love God in our neighbour; this is to fulfil the law of Christ. But to look on our brother as our enemy because he bears ill-will to us, is to be a real enemy to our own souls; to hate or despise him on that account is to renounce our own salvation; and to pursue him with rancour and vengeance, for which we have not the smallest grounds in justice or reason, is to reproach the Almighty for punishing us by his means, and to withdraw ourselves from His Divine Providence; to persecute as an enemy one who is a real friend, and to provoke the Divine vengeance against ourselves.

Whoever considers these truths attentively will not be surprised that our Saviour, not content with commanding us to love those whom we call our enemies, and to do them good, exhorts us to be ready rather to suffer more from their hands than to resent what they have already done us: "I say to you, Do not resist evil; but if any man strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall force thee to go one mile, go with him other two. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away," Mat. v. 39. Such is the high perfection our blessed Saviour recommends to us in this sublime virtue. But before we can arrive at this perfection, self-love and our attachment to the things of this world must be crucified in us; for till then we shall scarcely be able to

understand, we shall be totally unfit to relish, the beauty of such sublime perfection. Happy, then, are those who study in earnest to take off their affections from "the things of the earth, and place them on the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," Col. iii. 2. This is the only sure foundation on which the spiritual edifice of Christian virtue can be built; and the more perfectly this foundation is laid, the more easily and speedily will the soul ascend to the holy mountain of perfection.

Section III.

Love of Ourselves.

Q. 8. Is it lawful or laudable to love ourselves?

A. On this we must observe, (1.) That to love, as we have seen above, is to wish well and to do good to the one we love; to wish and procure his happiness. All mankind are born with an innate desire of happiness, which urges every one to seek and endeavour to procure it. To love ourselves, then, is a fundamental law of nature impressed in our souls, and interwoven with our frame, by the great Author of our being, for the best purposes. Our blessed Saviour, in commanding us to love our neighbour as ourselves, presupposes this innate principle of our nature, and lays it down as the standard by which we are to regulate our love to others. (2.) Now there are two kinds of happiness of which we are capable; the one consisting in the sanctification of our soul, and in being united to God, our sovereign good, by grace in this life, and by glory in the next; the other consisting in the gratification of our senses and appetites in the enjoyment of the good things of this present

life, and in the indulgence of the pleasures of flesh and blood. These two kinds of happiness are diametrically opposed, and wholly inconsistent with each other, as we have seen above, Chap. IV. Q. 4, No. 4. (3.) Hence arise two different kinds of love of ourselves, according to the kind of happiness we desire and endeavour to procure. If we place our happiness in God, and seek it in the sanctification of our souls, and in being, as far as in us lies, united with Him, our love for ourselves will be a holy, spiritual, sanctified love—a branch of the love of God, and the proper exercise of that fundamental law of nature, that innate propensity to seek for happiness with which we are created. To love ourselves in this manner, then, is to fulfil the great end of our being, and to secure the one thing necessary, our eternal salvation. If we place our happiness in the enjoyments of this life, and in the gratification of our passions and lusts, our love for ourselves will be a carnal, sensual, animal love, a perversion of the end for which we were created, and which will lead us to eternal misery.

(4.) Before the Fall, man loved himself with a holy, spiritual love, walking always with his God, and having no other view but to please Him, and prepare himself to be united to Him in everlasting happiness. But after the Fall this holy love was in a manner extinguished in his soul by the corruption of sin; the carnal, sensual, and animal love seized upon all his powers and faculties; so that in our present corrupted state we naturally love ourselves only with that unhappy self-love which is the source of sin here, and of eternal misery hereafter. This is called *self-love*, not because it deserves that name, but because by the corruption of sin it naturally predominates in all mankind. We bring it

into the world with us, and are so blinded by it that by nature we know no other happiness than in indulging it. It is loving our corrupt nature, and consists in honouring, flattering, and pleasing it; and accordingly the mortification required from us by our Saviour is called *self-denial*, and hating ourselves, because it consists in denying the inclinations of our nature as corrupted by sin, in treating its perverse affections with severity and rigour. (5.) Hence it follows, that to love ourselves with the love of charity —with that spiritual holy love which unites us to God —is the only love which deserves to be called by that name; but to love ourselves with a carnal, sensual love—with that self-love which flows from the corruption of our nature by sin—is really to hate ourselves, and to be our own greatest enemies. (6.) But as this unhappy self-love is deeply interwoven in our frame, as we bring it into the world with us, and are in continual danger of being ruined by its delusions, it is our duty to extirpate it from our souls, and to implant in its stead that holy, spiritual love which alone will bring us to God. To excite and enable us to do this is the great design of all that our blessed Saviour did and suffered; to this all His commands, all His counsels, all the sacred maxims of His gospel tend: and for this purpose it is that He lays down, as the first step in His service, that we deny ourselves, mortify our lusts, and crucify our flesh with its vices, as we have seen above, Chap. IV. sect. 2. (7.) But even in the state of innocence man enjoyed many things which gave pleasure to his senses and natural appetites, as the relish we feel in food, the comfort of rest and sleep, the satisfaction we enjoy in the beauties of the works of God, in the charms of music, and the like;

and the very garden in which God placed our first parents at their creation was, from the abundance of those delights which it contained, called "a paradise of pleasure, planted by the hand of God," Gen. ii. 8. In our present state there are other things necessary for enabling us to discharge our duties, and which naturally give pleasure and satisfaction; as vigorous health, a good name, the society of neighbours, and the approbation of our friends. Jesus Christ, our model and master, who was sanctity itself, used these things as occasion required, without the smallest detriment to His sanctity. It is evident, therefore, that the holy, spiritual love which we ought to have for ourselves, does not require us to divest ourselves of all human enjoyments and natural satisfactions—we would cease to be human creatures if we did; on the contrary, it even requires us to use them according to our lawful necessities, but to regulate their use by what the law of God prescribes as to the measure, manner, and motive of doing so.

Q. 9. What does the law of God lay down on this subject?

A. To understand this properly, we must observe, (1.) That we do not belong to ourselves: we are not our own masters—we belong to God, and are wholly His; not only by creation, as we have seen, Chap. II. sect. 3, but also by redemption, of which the Scripture says, "Know ye not that you are not your own, for you are bought with a great price?" 1 Cor. vi. 19. And what this is St Peter tells us, "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled," 1 Pet. i. 18. St Paul also says, "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For

whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's," Rom. xiv. 7. (2.) If therefore our sovereign Lord, for His own good ends, leaves us to the freedom of our will in this our mortal state, He at the same time lays us under a strict obligation of taking the necessary care of our being, both as to soul and body, for their preservation and improvement, that in due time we may restore ourselves to Him again, and be happily united to Him for ever. This is declared in the parables of the talents, of the vineyard, of the unjust steward, and others. (3.) To render us more diligent in discharging the duties required for the preservation and improvement of our being, He has been graciously pleased to attach a sensible pleasure to the performance of these duties, and a painful sensation to the neglect of them. Thus, in the improvement of the soul we are stimulated to the acquisition of knowledge by curiosity, and we find satisfaction in acquiring it: we are deterred from evil by our conscience or moral sense, and the approbation of that internal monitor affords pleasure to the soul when we do good. We are also encouraged to the improvement of the soul by the approbation of others, and the satisfaction of a good reputation: we are deterred from the contrary by the fear of shame, and the pain of disgrace and infamy. In the necessary care of our body, the satisfaction we find in taking food, in repose and sleep, in clothes, in exercise, in cleanliness, &c., renders these things agreeable, though otherwise they would be irksome and unpleasant, as we see in the loss of appetite in sickness; on the contrary, the painful sensations of hunger, thirst, and weariness, force us in a manner to do what is necessary for the preservation of our body. We are excited

to labour for a necessary competence of worldly goods, by the pleasure found in them; and we are deterred from idleness and sloth by the pain and misery which accompany poverty. (4.) Our self-love strongly co-operates with our duty in procuring and using the means necessary for the preservation of our being, though with different degrees of ardour, as the objects are more or less necessary, and according to the various dispositions of different individuals; and hence all mankind are naturally impelled to desire, and endeavour to procure, the various goods of life which conduce to the above ends. But here is seen the corruption of our self-love, which seeks these things merely for the sensible pleasure that accompanies them, places its happiness in the enjoyment of that pleasure, and rests in it as its end. This pleasure is ordained by God as a help to the performance of our duty with more alacrity and ease, but is totally incapable of making us happy, or of filling the boundless capacity of the human heart. Hence it is that our deluded self-love, never fully satisfied with any pleasure it finds in those enjoyments, pursues them with still greater ardour, in hopes of obtaining satisfaction from the increased measure of sensual delight it receives from them; and the more we give ourselves to this pursuit, the more the whole man becomes enslaved to these pleasures, and is hurried into every excess, offensive to God, and ruinous to the soul. Instead of preserving our being for God as His property, by following the suggestions of self-love we destroy soul and body, and deprive Almighty God of both for ever. Upon these principles are founded those prescriptions which the law of God lays down for the exercise of that spiritual sanctified love which we owe to ourselves.

(1.) That we are not to consider the temporal

goods of this life the end of our existence, but only the means of God's appointment for preserving our health and vigour of body and mind, by which we may be enabled to discharge those duties of religion, justice, and charity, which He has laid upon us, in order to obtain at last the enjoyment of Himself. Hence we are bound to employ lawful industry, and to labour, according to the state of life in which God has placed us, to procure such a competence of the goods of this life as is necessary for preserving our health and strength in His service. Thus St Paul says, "We entreat you, brethren, that you use your endeavour to be quiet, and that you do your own business, and work with your hands, as we commanded you," 1 Thess. iv. 10. Again, he confirms this duty from his own example, and repeats it in still stronger terms; "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing, but in labour and in toil we work night and day; . . . for also when we were with you, we declared this to you, That if any man will not work, neither let him eat. For we have heard that there are some among you that walk disorderly, not working at all, but curiously meddling. Now, we charge them that are such, and beseech them by the Lord Jesus Christ, that working with silence they would eat their own bread," 2 Thess. iii. 8. Nay, it is to our performance of this duty that the promise is made by Almighty God of supplying His faithful servants with the necessaries of life, by giving His blessing to their lawful endeavours; thus, "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, that walk in His ways, for thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands: blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee," Ps. cxxvii. 1. "Say to the just man that it is well, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings," Isa. iii. 10. And this duty was imposed upon man im-

mediately after the Fall, when God said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread," Gen. iii. 19. But,

(2.) As the success of our labours for procuring these goods depends more upon the blessing of God than upon our own industry, we are not to be solicitous about the success of our affairs, but having done our part, and recommended all to God, we must be contented with whatever portion of the necessaries of life He thinks fit to bestow, being persuaded that He alone knows what measure of them is best for us, and will never fail to grant what is for our real good. Thus, "Be not solicitous," says our Lord, "saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? for after these things do the heathens seek. For your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you. Be not therefore solicitous for to-morrow, for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," Mat. vi. 31. To which St Paul adds, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and certainly we can carry nothing out; but having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content," 1 Tim. vi. 6. We must not, therefore, set our hearts upon having great abundance of the goods of this life, for this would be indulging our corrupt self-love, and exposing ourselves to the utmost danger: "They that will become rich fall into many temptations, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition," ver. 9. And if God in His providence should send us abundance

of these goods, we must not set our hearts and affections on them, but use them in the sanctified manner which His holy law prescribes: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them," Ps. lxi. 11; and, "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; . . . to do good, to be rich in good works, to give easily, to communicate to others: to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life," 1 Tim. vi. 17.

(3.) We are not to consider the pleasure which nature feels in the lawful and necessary use of these goods, of mind or body, as an object desirable in itself, and in which we may rest and find our happiness; but only as a seasoning graciously joined to them by God to enable us to use them with greater alacrity and ease. We must never attach our affections to that pleasure, much less must we use the things themselves for the mere satisfaction of enjoying it. We must receive it with thanksgiving as a gift of God, and use the things themselves with indifference to the result, according to the orders of the apostle: "Thus, therefore, I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that they also who have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away: But I would have you to be without solicitude," 1 Cor. vii. 29.

(4.) When we are threatened with any temporal evil, whether in our person, goods, or reputation, the love we owe to ourselves, and the care we are obliged to take of ourselves, for God's sake, require that we should use

such lawful means as reason suggests to avert that evil; that we should pray to God to be delivered from it, and if necessary fly from it: thus our Saviour teaches us to pray daily, "deliver us from evil;" and He gave this rule to His apostles, "When they shall persecute you in this city, flee into another," Mat. x. 23. We wholly belong to God; He may do with us as He pleases; and as we know not when any evil threatens us but it may be His will actually to inflict it, we ought to use the means of avoiding it without solicitude, and with entire resignation to His will. Our Saviour Himself prayed to His Father to be delivered from the bitter cup of His passion, but immediately adds, "not My will but Thine be done." Thus David, when flying from his rebellious son Absalom, who sought to destroy him, sent back the ark into the city, and said, "If I shall find grace in the sight of the Lord, He will bring me again, and show me both it and His tabernacle;" and then immediately adds, "But if He shall say to me, Thou pleasest me not: I am ready, let Him do that which is good before Him," 2 Kings (Sam.), xv. 25. Thus the valiant Judas, exhorting his little army to do their part manfully in fighting to defend their country and the sanctuary from destruction, said, "Gird yourselves and be valiant men, that you may fight with these nations that are assembled against us, to destroy us and our sanctuary:" but adds, "Nevertheless, as it shall be the will of God in heaven, so be it done," 1 Mac. iii. 58. If, notwithstanding our endeavours to escape it, the threatened evil should come upon us, we may know that it is the will of God, and therefore should submit with readiness, and receive it from His hand with silence and patience, saying with our blessed Saviour, "The cup that My Father giveth Me,

shall I not drink it?" or with Eli, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good in His sight;" or with David, "I was dumb, and I opened not my mouth, because Thou hast done it." But when any temporal evil comes upon us, as we do not know how far it may be the will of God that it should continue to afflict us, it is lawful, and even a duty, to use the proper means to be delivered from it; but always with the same holy dispositions as above, and with the same resignation to the will of God, if they prove unsuccessful, and the evil continue. Thus it is our duty to take the proper remedies for the recovery of health, and to vindicate our reputation against false accusations.

(5.) But the great and most important part of this holy exercise is to do all in order to please God, and to give Him glory. We must use the creatures of God, not to please or gratify ourselves, but because it is His holy will that we do so for the preservation of our health and strength in His service, saying with the royal prophet, "I will keep my strength to Thee, for Thou art my protector," Ps. lviii. 10. We must use them within the strict bounds of moderation and necessity, carefully restraining our self-love from running into excess; because God requires us to do so, and prohibits all excess in the use of His creatures, as hurtful to the end for which He gives them. We must use them with indifference, cutting off all attachment to the pleasure we receive from them, because He forbids us to set our affections on anything in this world, otherwise "the love of the Father is not in us." We must be resigned to be deprived of them if such be His holy will; and cheerfully to suffer the opposite evils, if He be pleased to send them. In a word, whatever we do or suffer, we

must endeavour to keep God always before our eyes, to do all in obedience to His will, and with a view to His glory: according to the express rule which He has given us by His holy apostle, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31.

Such, then, is the holy love of ourselves which the law of God enjoins; a love which is in direct opposition to all the corruptions of self-love, which is a sublime exercise of divine charity, containing in itself a high degree of Christian perfection, to which it is the duty of all to aspire. It is only by loving ourselves in this manner that we shall be brought at last to the possession of that eternal bliss for which we were created, and which alone can fully satisfy the innate desire of happiness which every man feels within his breast.

Section IV.

Of the Manner of Loving our Neighbour.

Q. 10. In what manner are we commanded to love our neighbour?

A. The Scripture proposes three rules: That we love our neighbour as we love ourselves; That we love him as the members of the same body love one another; and, That we love him as Christ loved us.

Q. 11. How are we to love our neighbour as ourselves?

A. To love our neighbour as we love ourselves is the very expression of the commandment, "Thou shalt love

thy neighbour as thyself;" the meaning of which is, that the love we owe to our neighbour ought to have the same tendency and the same properties as the love which we have for ourselves. With regard to its tendency, it ought to have in view the real happiness of our neighbour in the present, but chiefly in the next life; because such is the tendency of our love for ourselves. By this, our conduct towards him must be regulated. Our neighbour is a human being, having the same natural feelings and dispositions as ourselves; and therefore we are to judge of the effect our conduct will have upon him, from the effect similar conduct has upon us, according to that of the wise man, "Judge of the dispositions of thy neighbour by thyself," Ecclus. xxxi. 18. Hence arise two general rules for the practice of loving our neighbour. The first is negative, and laid down in the Old Testament in these words, "See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another," Tob. iv. 16. Whatever is hurtful to us, either in soul or body, we naturally dislike to have done to us; this we must therefore avoid doing to our neighbour. The second is positive, and given to us by Jesus Christ in His gospel, "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them," Mat. vii. 12. We desire to receive such treatment from our fellow-creatures as contributes to make us happy; it gives us pleasure when they act towards us in that manner; and we are uneasy and discontented when they treat us otherwise. Consequently, if we love our neighbour as ourselves, if we wish his happiness as we wish our own, we must carefully do to him as we would desire others to do to us in his situation. These two general rules take in a wide field, and, did not our unhappy self-love blind us, would suffice to regulate

our whole conduct towards others. Without descending to particulars, we would only need to put ourselves in our neighbour's place, and ask our own heart what we would wish others to do, or not to do, to us; and if our heart spoke impartially, our duty would immediately appear.

The chief qualities of our love for ourselves regard our judgments, our affections, and our actions. (1.) The love we have for ourselves makes us always ready to form the most favourable judgment of ourselves, our dispositions, and our actions. We always put the best construction we can upon them; we are ingenious in finding out a thousand pretexts to excuse our conduct in the eyes of the world; we even frequently mistake our imperfections and defects for virtues. We are unwilling to condemn ourselves; we always wish others to think favourably of us. Such, therefore, ought to be our judgment of our neighbours, if we really love them as we love ourselves; and such the law of God requires, condemning rash judgments, suspicions, and jealousies, uncharitable opinions, and interpretations of our neighbour's motives and conduct. (2.) We love ourselves with a sincere love. We frequently profess to love others, when we have little liking for them in our hearts, or we profess to love them more than we really do. But this is not the case with the love we have for ourselves; we always have a true and sincere love for ourselves, and from our hearts we wish ourselves to be well and happy; this love is natural, and born with us; it is implanted by our Creator, approved by Him, and with the same sincerity of affection He requires we should love our neighbour for His sake: "With a brotherly love, from a sincere heart, love one another earnestly," 1 Pet. i. 22. "Let love be without dissimulation, . . .

loving one another with a brotherly love," Rom. xii. 9. "Now the end of the commandment is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and unfeigned faith," 1 Tim. i. 5. Such was the love of St Paul when he said to king Agrippa, "I would to God, that both in little and in much, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, should become such as I am, except these bands," Acts, xxvi. 29. (3.) We love ourselves with an efficacious love; a love that shows itself in action. We are not content with barely wishing ourselves well. We use our best endeavours to acquire and preserve those things which we know or imagine will contribute to our happiness. Such, also, ought to be our love for our neighbour, such the law of God requires; and such indeed is all sincere love: witness that of parents to their children, and of true friends to each other. Hence the Scripture says, "He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth," 1 John, iii. 17. "And if a brother or sister be naked, and want daily food, and one of you say to them, Go in peace, be you warmed and filled; yet give them not those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it profit?" James, ii. 15. And our blessed Saviour shows in the strongest terms the necessity of this quality of our love for our neighbour, when, relating the sentence that shall be passed on the good and bad at the last day, He expressly declares that sentence of eternal bliss shall be passed on the good, because the love they had for their neighbour was an efficacious love; and that the wicked shall be condemned to eternal woe, because their love for their neighbour was devoid of that quality.

Q. 12. How are we to love our neighbour as members of the same body love one another?

A. This rule is proposed to us by St Paul, who says, "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another," Rom. xii. 4. And having laid down this foundation, he draws from it this conclusion, "Let love be without dissimulation: hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good: loving one another with a brotherly love," ver. 9, such as the members of the same body have for one another; and then he enumerates the great duties which such love requires. Now, in examining the manner in which the members of the body love each other, the two following particulars are chiefly taken notice of in Scripture:

(1.) The members of the same body never envy those above them, nor despise those below them. We must consider with the apostle that "the body is not one member, but many," 1 Cor. xii. 14, which have all their different uses, of which some are more honourable, others less; as we see, for example, in the use of the eye, the hand, and the foot; but yet they are all necessary for the good of the whole; for "if the whole body were eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where would be the smelling?" ver. 17. Hence none of the members can say it has no need of the others. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I need not thy help: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you," ver. 21. In all this variety of offices and uses of the members, they never envy the others the advantages they possess, nor complain of their own position. If the eye receive any pleasure from the beauties of the sight, if the tongue be delighted with delicate food, the

other members do not envy them that pleasure, but rejoice in it as a common good to the whole. The foot does not complain of its low station, nor of the heavy weight it carries, but performs its work with alacrity for the benefit of the whole body. On the other hand, the eye does not despise the foot on account of its mean station, nor look down upon it with contempt as an object unworthy of regard; much less does the mouth smile at its mistakes, nor the tongue expose it to ridicule when it makes a false step. On the contrary, all strive to hide the infirmities of the less honourable members; for "such as we think to be the less honourable members of the body," says the Scripture, "upon these we bestow more abundant honour, and those that are our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; for our comely parts have no need. But God hath tempered the body together, giving the more abundant honour to that which wanted, that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another," ver. 23. See here a beautiful picture of the love we owe to one another!

We are one body in Christ, and members one of another; we have different stations, offices, and uses in this body; we have mutually need of one another, and are all necessary for the whole; for if all were masters, who would serve? if all were servants, who would employ them? if all were rich, who would work? if all were poor, who would supply them? Now, "It is God who hath set the members, every one of them, in the body, as it hath pleased Him," ver. 18. Consequently every one ought to be content and satisfied with the station assigned to him, and diligent in fulfilling the duties belonging to it; for "As the Lord hath distributed to every one, as God hath called every one, so let him

walk; . . . let every one abide in the same calling in which he was called," 1 Cor. vii. 17, 20.

We ought never to envy our fellow-members any advantage they may possess over us, nor be sorry that God has given to them what He hath denied to us; but we ought rather to rejoice in their advantages, striving to make good use of our own talent, and praising God as the author of all. Much less ought we to despise or ridicule our fellow-members who are in any respect beneath us, but we must rather study to hide their infirmities, and show them more attention and regard on that account, in order to encourage them, and to render their situation easier. Though their imperfections and defects of body or mind are disagreeable to us, yet we must remember that it is by the will or permission of God they are what they are. Their weaknesses and imperfections are their misfortunes, which demand our pity and compassion. They are our fellow-members, of that body of which Jesus Christ is the head. We are all weak and infirm, full of defects and imperfections. We also give to others so many occasions of bearing with us, that it is our duty to "bear one another's burdens, and so we shall fulfil the law of Christ," Gal. vi. 2. "Put ye on therefore," says St Paul, "as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another," Col. iii. 12. "Do not esteem him" (your imperfect brother) "as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother," 2 Thess. iii. 15. "If a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," Gal. vi. 1.

(2.) Another particular exercise of the love between members of the same body is laid down by St Paul, and

proposed for our example in these words: "If one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with it; and if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are members of Christ, and members of member," 1 Cor. xii. 27—that is, of one another. "Rejoice with them that rejoice," says St Paul, "weep with them that weep. Be of one mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to the humble," Rom. xii. 15. And such is always the effect of true love. See it between husband and wife, parents and children, and all others who have a real affection for each other. To this also belongs the readiness which all the members have to fly to the assistance of any member that may be threatened with evil.

Q. 13. How are we to love our neighbour as Christ loved us?

A. This rule is given us by Jesus Christ Himself, and we are expressly enjoined to observe it as His special command: "This is my command, that you love one another, as I have loved you." "A new command I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you." And this example, besides containing all the perfections of the two former rules in the most eminent degree, includes also three other excellences, which carry our love to our neighbour to its highest perfection.

(1.) Christ loved us with a gratuitous love, without any preceding merit on our part when by our sins we deserved His hatred, and though he knew how ungrateful we would be for all His favours. See this considered, Chap. III. Hence, if we would love our neighbour as Christ loved us, we must not consider his merits, whether he be agreeable or disagreeable to us, friend or enemy; whether we may expect he will be

grateful or otherwise. Favourable circumstances ought not to be the motives of our loving him, nor ought those that are unfavourable to be a hindrance to it. Whatever our neighbour may be in these respects, still he is the child of God, created to His image, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and one whom God commands us to love, &c. The love of our neighbour, which Christ requires, ought to be founded only on these motives, and the more purely we adhere to them, the more God-like our love will be; the less any worldly views enter, and the less our own self-love finds any interest or pleasure in it, the more pleasing will it be to God, because the more resembling the love of Jesus Christ, and therefore the more profitable will it be to our own souls. "If you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens this?" Mat. v. 46. "Love your enemies, do good and lend, hoping for nothing thereby; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest; for He is kind to the unthankful and the evil," Luke, vi. 35. "And when thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy neighbours who are rich, lest they also invite thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just," Luke, xiv. 12. And Tobias gave this among other holy advices to his son, "Eat thy bread with the hungry and the needy, and with thy garments cover the naked," Tob. iv. 17.

(2.) The love that Christ bears to us is a comprehensive love. There are many whose charity is so limited and confined as not to extend beyond their own family or kindred, their own party or country; and they think it a sufficient excuse for not assisting others to say, "He is none of mine; I have nothing to do with him; let his own people look to him." This is far from the example that Christ gives us. He came to this world and laid down His life on the cross, not for one people, one country, or one nation only, but for all mankind; He died for all, and "wills that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. And He makes His sun to rise upon the good and upon the bad, and rains upon the just and the unjust;" to teach us that our love for our neighbour ought to embrace all mankind, and not be confined to any one set of men. And indeed to act otherwise is to show nothing but a mere natural love, founded upon natural motives only, and little else than the effect of passion or inclination. True charity is founded in God, and the relation all mankind have to God obliges us to love them for God's sake. Charity, therefore, embraces all without exception, sincerely wishes every human creature well, and is ready on every occasion to help and serve all. Hence when our neighbour needs our help, we are not to consider his family, country, or religion; but we are to look upon him as our neighbour, whom God commands us to love; and as a brother of Jesus Christ in distress, whom He commands us to relieve. This our Saviour beautifully displays to us in the parable of the good Samaritan. Though the Jew who had fallen among robbers was a stranger to him, of a different nation and of a different religion, and though the Jews were always at enmity with the Samaritans, yet the

Samaritan no sooner saw his distress than he immediately went to him with a heart full of compassion, and performed all the duties of the most tender affection. And after relating this, our Saviour concludes, "Go and do thou in like manner," Luke, x. 37. It is true that, when two persons are in equal need, and we cannot assist both, the order of charity requires him to be preferred towards whom we have the strictest ties, and especially where any motives of justice enter. Thus, parents, to whom we owe so much, are to be assisted before strangers; friends and benefactors before others; Christians and members of the Church before those who are not. This is agreeable to reason, and expressly commanded by Almighty God, in these words of the apostle: "In doing good let us not fail: for in due time we shall reap, not failing. Therefore, whilst we have time, let us do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith," Gal. vi. 9. It is also confirmed by the example of God Himself; for though He loves all men, wills that all should be saved, and gives to all the necessary helps to salvation; though He bestows the common effects of His love upon all by making His sun to rise on the just and the unjust, yet He confers His special favours more liberally upon those who, by making a good use of them, are more nearly united to Him by the ties of His grace, and by a more perfect resemblance to His blessed Son Jesus. But with regard to goodwill, and our general readiness to assist all in distress, none of the human race ought to be excepted, according to the rules of Christian charity.

(3.) The love of Christ to us is strong and persevering. This is the constant character of true charity, for "Love is strong as death: burning love is hard as hell; the lamps thereof are lamps of fire and flames. Many waters

cannot quench charity, neither can the floods drown it," Cant. viii. 6. And hence the apostle declares that "charity never falleth away," 1 Cor. xiii. 8. This is particularly remarkable in the love of Jesus Christ to us, for "having loved His own, who were in the world, He loved them even to the end," John, xiii. 1. All the injuries mankind committed against Him, could not stop the amazing effects of His love; whatever ingratitude we show Him, He still continues to love us, and to bestow His favours upon us. And this is the grand rule He desires us to follow in loving our neighbours, so as even to lay down our life, if necessary, for their salvation, after His example. "In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," 1 John, iii. 16. And if our lives, how much more our ease, our goods, or any worldly enjoyment? And the reason that no behaviour of our neighbour ought to diminish our love for him is, because the motives on which the love of our neighbour is founded never fail, and no behaviour of his ought to alter our love to him.

Q. 14. What is the general scope and tendency of the commandments of the second table, which prescribe the duties we owe to our neighbour?

A. This will easily appear from what has been said, as they all tend to elucidate the exercise of the love of our neighbour. For all the duties of this love are reduced to three general heads. (1.) To give to those above, and to those below us, whatever love and service their station in life requires, as members of the same body; and this is prescribed by the fourth commandment. (2.) To do our neighbour no injury, in his person, goods, or reputation; but, on the contrary, to do him what

service we can, according as his necessities require, and our abilities. And this is the subject of the four following commandments. (3.) Not even in thought to desire evil to him, but to entertain goodwill towards him, and to wish him well; and the duties of this class are contained in the two last commandments.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Q. 1. WHAT is the fourth commandment?

A. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee," Exod. xx. 12. Or, as it is expressed in another place, "Honour thy father and mother as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that thou mayest live a long time, and it may be well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God will give thee," Deut. v. 16.

Q. 2. What is the general scope or meaning of this commandment?

A. To understand this, we must know who are meant in Scripture language by father and mother. (1.) Our natural parents, according to that of the wise man, "Hearken to thy father that begot thee; and despise not thy mother when she is old," Prov. xxiii. 22. And "He that feareth the Lord, honoureth his parents, and will serve them as his masters, who brought him into the world," Ecclus. iii. 8. Now these are called parents by way of excellence, because to them, under God, we owe our natural life. To preserve this life and make us happy in it, they feed and nourish us; they guide and direct us; they give us instruction, education,

and advice; they correct, reprove, and encourage us to do good; they protect and defend us while under their care, and provide all necessaries for us when we cannot help ourselves. (2.) The pastors of our souls are also called our fathers, because from them we receive the spiritual life of grace in baptism; by them our souls are fed with the Word of God and the holy sacraments; by them we are instructed in the fear of God and our duty as Christians; and by their good advice, prayers, and the offering of the holy sacrifice, we are defended from our spiritual enemies. Hence St Paul says to the Corinthians, "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you by the Gospel," 1 Cor. iv. 15; and to the Galatians, "My little children, of whom I am in labour again, till Christ be formed in you," Gal. iv. 19. Hence Eliseus addressed his master and pastor Elias by the name of father, 4 Kings, ii. 12. And when the prophet Eliseus himself was upon his deathbed, Joas the king "went down to him, and wept before him, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the guider thereof," 4 Kings, xiii. 14. (3.) Kings, princes, civil magistrates, and rulers, are also called fathers, on account of the authority they have over the people, the care they take in providing for their happiness, defending their persons and property, preserving good order and peace among them. Thus the prophet, speaking of the protection which the Church should receive from kings and princes, says, "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nurses," Isa. xlix. 23. (4.) Heads of families are also called fathers, for the same reason: Naaman's "servants came to him and said, Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou wouldst have done it," 4 Kings, v. 13. The same may be

said of teachers, instructors, and our superiors in age. From this it appears, that though by father and mother our natural parents are chiefly understood, yet, according to the style of the Scripture, these words include all lawful superiors. The design, therefore, of the fourth commandment, is to point out the duties we owe to those who have any lawful authority over us, and also the duties which all in authority owe to those under their charge. We shall explain only some of the most important.

Section I.

The Duties of Children to their Parents.

Q. 3. On what is founded the obligation of children to honour their parents?

A. It is founded on duty, gratitude, and interest. (1.) On duty, from the express command of Almighty God, and also from the light of nature which strongly dictates this obligation. Hence we find all the holy servants of God most attentive to their parents, in obedience to this commandment. Thus when Joseph heard his father was approaching Egypt, "He made ready his chariot, and went up to meet his father, and seeing him he fell upon his neck, and embracing him wept," Gen. xlvi. 29. "And he nourished his brethren and all his father's house, allowing food to every one," Gen. xlvii. 12. And when King Solomon's mother came to see him, "The king arose to meet her, and bowed to her, and sat down upon his throne: and a throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand," 3 Kings, ii. 19. But especially we have the example of Jesus Christ, "Who

went, down to Nazareth, and was subject to them" (His parents), Luke, ii. 51. In compliance with His mother's desire, He wrought the miracle at the marriage of Cana, though otherwise "His hour was not come," John, ii. 4. And with His dying words upon the cross, He recommended her to the care of His beloved disciple. (2.) On gratitude, arising from what our parents have done and suffered for us. To our parents, under God, we owe our very being. After bringing us into the world, they provide all necessaries for us when we cannot do the smallest thing to help ourselves; for at our birth we are more helpless and miserable than any other living creature. Food, raiment, education, and every other necessary in our helpless days we owe to our parents. And what have they not suffered on our account? What does not the mother suffer from sickness and pain during the nine months the child lies in the womb? Who can conceive her pangs and torments in labour, and the danger of death itself? And after we are born, her sufferings are not at an end on our account; for many months she feeds us with the substance of her own body, watches over us by night and by day, loses her own rest to take care of us, and is in continual care and solicitude about us. Can we ever repay our parents for all this? Hence the Scripture says, "Honour thy father, and forget not the groanings of thy mother: remember that thou hadst not been born but through them; and make a return to them as they have done to thee," Ecclus. vii. 29. "Thou shalt honour thy mother all the days of her life: for thou must be mindful what and how great perils she suffered for thee in her womb," Tob. iv. 3.

(3.) On their own interest, which arises not only from the general promise of a long and happy life,

but also from the many other promises of particular blessings both for soul and body, which are annexed to the faithful discharge of this duty. Thus, "Children, hear the judgment of your father, and so do that you may be saved. He that honoureth his mother, is as one that layeth up a treasure. He that honoureth his father shall have joy in his own children; and in the day of his prayer he shall be heard. He that honoureth his father shall enjoy long life," Ecclus. iii. 2, &c. "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forget not the law of thy mother; that grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck," Prov. i. 8. How much it is the interest of children to honour their parents appears also from the dreadful threats against those who dishonour them—such as a short and miserable life, and an untimely death, as we see exemplified in Absalom, with many other particular threats, especially those following: "The Levites shall pronounce and say to all the men of Israel with a loud voice, Cursed be he that honoureth not his father and mother: and all the people shall say, Amen," Deut. xxvii. 14, 16. "Of what an evil fame is he that forsaketh his father? and he is cursed of God that angereth his mother," Ecclus. iii. 18. This curse consists in sending those evils upon them, which are the reverse of the above-mentioned blessings. Hence parents who are unhappy in their children would do well to reflect upon their former behaviour to their own parents, and they will perhaps find good cause for their present sufferings. Undutiful children would also do well to look forward to the misery they are laying up for themselves in old age from their children. Lastly, children ought to be dutiful to their parents, hoping to inherit their blessing, and fearing the fatal consequences of their curse. "Honour thy father in work and word,

and all patience, that a blessing may come upon thee from him, and his blessing may remain in the latter end. The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation," Ecclus. iii. 9. Thus when Isaac blessed his son Jacob, though by mistake, instead of Esau, yet afterwards, inspired by God, he said, "I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed," Gen. xxvii. 33. How fatal the curse of parents to their children we have seen, Chap. XI. Q. 33.

Q. 4. In what does this honour consist which children are commanded to show to their parents?

A. It consists in three things — love, respect, and obedience, which point out three classes of duties that children owe to their parents.

Q. 5. What kind of love do children owe to their parents?

A. It must have all the properties of the love of our neighbour (for which see above, Chap. XIII. Sec. 4) in a very eminent degree. Because, besides the general motives which are common to others, we have all those strong reasons above mentioned for loving our parents in particular. Our parents even represent God Himself to us, and bear His image. He is our Creator, preserver, and ruler, and they act as His representatives. Consequently our love for our parents must be most cordial and sincere; we must have a real affection for them, and from our heart wish them well. This sincerity we must show both by words and actions, praying for them, doing them every service in our power, and studying to the utmost to make their life happy and agreeable by dutiful, affectionate, and respectful behaviour towards them, but especially by giving them all necessary assistance both for soul and body when poverty, old age,

or sickness comes upon them. "Son," says the Scripture, "support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life. And if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not when thou art in thy strength; for the relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten; for good shall be repaid thee for the sin of thy mother; and in justice thou shalt be built up, and in the day of affliction thou shalt be remembered, and thy sins shall melt away as ice in the fair warm weather. Of what an evil fame is he that forsaketh his father? and he is cursed of God that angereth his mother," Ecclus. iii. 14.

Q. 6. Is it a grievous sin in children to do anything contrary to the love they owe their parents?

A. It is a very grievous sin, as is evident from the sentence which the Word of God passes upon it in all its different branches of thoughts, words, and actions. (1.) To hate their parents, or in their hearts wish evil to them—for example, to wish their death or sickness—is a great crime: for if it be a grievous sin to wish ill to any neighbour (as we have seen above, Chap. XI. Q. 30), even though our enemy—and if the Scripture says, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart," Lev. xix. 17—how much more grievous must it be to hate or wish ill to our parents, whom we are so much more strictly bound to love than our neighbours in general? It is directly contrary to the first principles of charity, contrary to the impulse of nature itself, and makes one a monster, worse than the brutes that perish. (2.) To show this hatred outwardly, by expressing it in words, or cursing one's parents, is a mortal sin of the deepest dye; and we find the greatest punishments pronounced against it, both death of the body and death of the soul. Thus, "He that curseth his father or mother, shall die the

death," Exod. xxi. 17. "He that curseth his father or mother, dying let him die; he hath cursed his father and mother, let his blood be upon him," Levit. xx. 9. "He that curseth his father and mother, his lamp shall be put out in the midst of darkness," Prov. xx. 20—that is, his life shall be cut off in the midst of his sins. (3.) If they proceed to actions, and strike their parents, this is still worse; it is an actual injury to the parents, a grievous insult to their authority, and therefore, "He that striketh his father or mother shall be put to death," Exod. xxi. 15. (4.) Though they abstain from these more manifest signs and effects of hatred to their parents, yet if they speak to them in a harsh, hasty, passionate manner, give them ill language and short answers, contradicting and vexing them by such undutiful behaviour, they commit a grievous sin against the love they owe them, a direct transgression of the command given as above in the preceding question; and the Scripture says, "He is cursed of God that angereth his mother," Ecclus. iii. 18; and "He that afflicteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is infamous and unhappy," Prov. xix. 26. (5.) To neglect to assist one's parents in their necessities is a sin which one could scarcely believe would enter into the breast of man, did not experience show the contrary. It is certainly a very great crime against justice, charity, and gratitude, considering that we owe to our parents what we never can repay. Hence the Scripture says, "Of what evil fame is he that forsaketh his father?" Ecclus. iii. 18. And if, as the Word of God assures us, "He that stealeth anything from his father or from his mother, and saith, This is no sin; is the partner of a murderer," Prov. xxviii. 24—even though the loss be small; what must he be who, when his parents are in poverty, refuses them the necessary assistance to

which they have so strong a title both in gratitude and justice?

Q. 7. In what manner are children to respect their parents?

A. (1.) They must have in their hearts an esteem and reverential fear of their parents, and by no means contemn or despise them, whatever weaknesses or infirmities they may observe in them; these claim sympathy and compassion from children, but can never justify contempt. "Let every one fear his father and his mother, . . . I am the Lord your God," Levit. xix. 3. "Son, support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life. If his understanding fail, have patience with him; and despise him not when thou art in thy strength," Ecclus. iii. 14. "Hearken to the father that begot thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old," Prov. xxiii. 22. "And the Levites shall pronounce and say to all the men of Israel, . . . Cursed be he that honoureth not his father and his mother: and all the people shall say, Amen," Deut. xxvii. 14, 16. (2.) They must honour their parents in their words and outward behaviour, paying them all deference on every occasion, speaking to them with respect, showing regard to what they say, and deferring to their opinions. See examples of this above, Q. 3, No. 1. Hence, to call one's parents bad names, to reproach, to upbraid them for their defects, to mock or deride them, is a very grievous sin, of which the Scripture says, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth the labour of his mother in bearing of him, let the ravens of the brooks pick it out, and the young eagles eat it," Prov. xxx. 17: where by the ravens and eagles are justly understood the infernal spirits; as our Saviour represents as the birds of the air those infernal spirits who take the word out of the heart of those who receive it,

Mat. xiii. 4, 19. And as for reproachful words, if "He that saith to his brother, Thou fool, shall," as Christ assures us, "be in danger of hell-fire," Mat. v. 22—what has he to expect who speaks so to his parents? Cham, the son of Noah, for laughing at his father, brought a most dreadful curse upon a great part of his posterity, Gen. ix. 25. (3.) Above all, they must never publish the weakness or defects of their parents; never speak nor complain of them so as to expose them to the contempt of the world. They must always remember that whatever faults they have, still they are their parents, and that the respect and honour which they owe them obliges them to defend and preserve them from contempt. "Glory not in the dishonour of thy father; for his shame is no glory to thee. For the glory of a man is from the honour of his father; and a father without honour is the disgrace of the son," Ecclus. iii. 12. (4.) While under their parents' jurisdiction, they ought to consult them in all their undertakings, and do nothing of any moment without their advice and concurrence. And this is particularly to be observed when children are thinking of settling in the world, and entering into the married state. On which see *Sincere Christian*, Chap. XXVII., Sec. 2.

Q. 8. In what manner are children obliged to obey their parents?

A. This is a branch of their duty which God Almighty strictly requires from children: "Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father, and forget not the law of thy mother: that grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck," Prov. i. 8. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is just. Honour thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with a promise," Eph. vi. 1. "Children, obey

your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord," Col. iii. 20, and Rom. i. 30, and 2 Tim. iii. 3. The apostle reckons disobedience to parents among those sins of the heathens and false teachers which render them odious to God, and cause their reprobation.

This duty consists in three things: (1.) In the obedience itself by which they exactly perform what their parents command, and avoid what they forbid. So long as children are under their parents' authority, and in their family, they are obliged to obey them in all things which are not against the law of God; this the apostle expressly declares—"In all things," and "in the Lord:" and this is particularly the case in family concerns, which are subject to the parents' management and authority. As the parents have the charge of their children's souls intrusted to them by Almighty God, and have authority over them for this purpose, they have a right to command their children in what regards their behaviour, the company they keep, the books they read, and their amusements. So that whatever orders or prohibitions parents give with regard to these things, children are obliged in conscience to obey. (2.) In the manner of their obedience, that it be cheerful, ready, and pleasant; without excuse or delay; without murmuring or stubbornness; without giving harsh words or making opposition—all which is most disagreeable to parents, tends to provoke them to anger, and is contrary to the respect children owe them. (3.) In receiving reproof and correction with patience — humbly acknowledging their fault like the prodigal son, asking pardon, and promising amendment. "He that loveth correction loveth knowledge; but he that hateth reproof is foolish," Prov. xii. 1. "A man that is prudent and well instructed will not

murmur when he is reproved," Ecclus. x. 28. "Hast thou seen a man wise in his own conceit? There shall be more hope of a fool than of him," Prov. xxvi. 12. "Instruction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way of life: he that hateth reproof shall die," Prov. xv. 10. "The man that with a stiff neck despiseth him that reproveth him, shall suddenly be destroyed; and health shall not follow him," Prov. xxix. 1. Now if all this be true, even when corrected by a friend out of charity, how much more when corrected by one's parent, who has full authority and a just right to do so?

Nothing shows more clearly how much Almighty God requires this obedience in all its parts than what He ordained in the old law to be done to disobedient children. "If a man have a stubborn and unruly son, who will not hear the commandments of his father and mother, and being corrected, slighteth obedience; they shall take him and bring him to the ancients of his city, and to the gate of judgment: and they shall say to them, This our son is rebellious and stubborn, he slighteth hearing our admonitions, he giveth himself to revelling, and to debauchery, and banqueting. The people of the city shall stone him, and he shall die, that you may remove the evil out of the midst of you, and all Israel hearing it may be afraid," Deut. xxi. 18. Where observe, Almighty God orders his parents to be his accusers, because by his disobedience he had lost the very being of a child; and the people were to stone him, as a public scandal calculated to bring a judgment upon the whole place. On the contrary, to show how pleasing is the obedience of children before God, even when the thing commanded by their parents is in itself indifferent, hear what we are told by the prophet Jeremias:

"And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine and cups; and I said to them, Drink ye wine. And they answered, We will not drink wine; because Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, You shall drink no wine, neither you nor your children for ever; neither shall you build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards, nor have any; but you shall dwell in tents all your days, that you may live many days upon the earth, in which you are strangers. Therefore we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all things that he commanded us," Jer. xxxv. 5. And this obedience was so pleasing in the eyes of God, that the prophet concludes: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and have kept all his precepts, and have done all that he commanded you: therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, There shall not be wanting a man of the race of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, standing before me for ever," Jer. xxxv. 18.

Section II.

Of the Duties of Parents to their Children.

Q. 9. How are the duties of parents to their children divided?

A. They are divided into two classes—the duties they owe to their children's bodies, and those they owe to their souls. Those of the first class need little explanation, as they are of less importance, and parents are commonly rather too solicitous about them; but those of

the other class are of the highest importance, and require particular attention, as it is in them that parents are generally most deficient, and often both to their own and their children's eternal ruin.

Q. 10. Whence arises the obligation of parents to take due care of their children's souls?

A. It arises from three most important sources—from what they owe to God; from the eternal happiness of their children; and from their own salvation, as well as their happiness in this life.

1. With regard to God, parents commonly are not sufficiently aware, and seldom think as they ought, of the obligation they contract with Almighty God on account of the children He bestows upon them. Children belong infinitely more to God than to their parents, both as to soul and body. They, as well as their parents, are wholly the property of God; He is sovereign master of both, by creation and redemption: parents are only instruments in the hand of God to bring their children into being; it is God who gives them soul and body, and all their powers and faculties. Children become still more the property of God by baptism, in which they are solemnly dedicated to His service for ever, and the parents contract a new obligation of watching over them for God. If, therefore, Almighty God still leaves these children with their parents, they are only a deposit which He leaves in trust; committing them for a time to their care, that as they were the instruments in His hand of bringing their children into being, so they may also be the instruments of bringing them to eternal happiness, which is the great end of their being. Hence parents contract the strictest obligation to take all necessary care of the trust committed to them, that they may be able one day to restore it to Him again in the state and condition which He requires.

It is with this, as with all the other talents which God bestows upon us — He only lends them for a time; we must improve them according to His will, and be able to give an account of them when He calls; and if we be deficient in so doing, we must answer to Him for our neglect.

2. As to the eternal happiness of children, we may justly say that it depends in a manner wholly on the care of parents. We come into this world under the greatest disadvantages as to eternity. Ignorant of the great truths that conduct to eternal bliss, violently bent upon everything that leads us to eternal misery, surrounded with numberless enemies and dangers, if left to ourselves we must inevitably perish. Like the earth of which we are formed, naturally we can produce nothing but weeds, tares, and noxious fruit. But as the earth, if cultivated, may be made to yield valuable produce, so, if by proper care our minds be seasoned with the fear of God and instructed in the great truths of eternity, if our natural propensity to evil be corrected and the seeds of virtue sown in our souls, there is no degree of Christian perfection and sanctity that we are not capable of acquiring. This, however, can only be done in our tender years. Our souls are then like soft wax, that may be moulded into any form, or made to receive any impression, either of virtue or vice, good or evil; but according to the form we take then, so will our future conduct be; for "a young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. xxii. 6. Hence it is manifest that the salvation of children depends in a great measure upon the dispositions implanted in them when young. If these be good and virtuous, they will contribute to bring them to eternal bliss; but if evil, they will lead them to eternal misery—for "His bones shall be

filled with the vices of youth, and they shall sleep with him in the dust," Job, xx. 11. Now, to whom does it belong to implant proper dispositions in children's minds? Most undoubtedly to their parents above all others, for the following reasons: (1.) For this very purpose are their children given them in trust by Almighty God, to Whom they belong. (2.) For this purpose He has implanted in their hearts a natural love of their children, and an affectionate desire for their happiness. (3.) For this purpose He has implanted in the minds of children that reverential love which gives parents such authority over their children, and makes it easy to form them in any way they please, if they do not lose that authority by their own misconduct. Hence it is that whatever they say makes a deep impression upon their children, whatever they do is an example which they readily follow, whatever they approve their children esteem, and whatever they condemn their children judge to be evil. Considering this, and that the parents alone have their children always in their company in their tender years, and consequently have daily opportunities of instilling into their minds the dispositions required for improving their souls, it is clear how easy it is for parents, and for parents alone, to form their minds in the way that Almighty God requires. Add to this, that as their children depend on them for food and raiment, and all other necessaries, they have the means of enforcing their instructions by suitable rewards and punishments, which never fail to have a great effect upon tender minds. Parents, therefore, have the power to make of their children what they please. This is confirmed by many examples. We admire the heroic virtue of Susannah, of whom the Scripture gives this character, that she "was a very beautiful woman, and one that feared God," imme-

diately adding the reason,—"for her parents being just, had instructed their daughter according to the law of Moses," Dan. xiii. 2. Tobias, the son, was a most holy man, and, as the Scripture tells us, "lived ninety-nine years in the fear of the Lord, with joy," Tob. xiv. 16. And what was the source of all his sanctity? His father, "from his infancy, taught him to fear God, and to abstain from all sin," Tob. i. 10. And indeed, if children heard nothing from their parents but what was good and virtuous, and saw nothing in their conduct but examples of piety, and if to such good instructions and example parents joined their fervent prayers to God, what fruits of virtue and sanctity might not be expected in their children? What an obligation does this impose on parents faithfully to do their part, since the salvation of their children so much depends on their doing so? especially if it be added (4.) that without their care all that others, whether masters or pastors, can do, will, generally speaking, have little effect.

3. The happiness of parents themselves for time and eternity, no less than that of their children, depends in a great measure upon the manner in which they discharge this duty. For, (1.) As to their eternal happiness: God has committed their children in trust to their care, and they are accountable to God for their souls. If, therefore, they be unfaithful to their charge, and through their fault or neglect the children's souls be lost, they must answer to God for that loss. "His blood will I require at your hand," said Almighty God to the pastors of His people, Ezek. iii. 18, if any one of them be lost through your fault. How much more will He do so from parents, whose ties to their children are in many respects so much more strict than those of pastors to their people? Our blessed Saviour pronounces a

dreadful woe upon him that shall scandalise little children by causing them to sin; what will be the woe of parents if they be the cause of losing their childrens' souls? Reflect on this, Christian parents! At the last day, it will not be asked you if you left your children rich, or if you gave them fine clothes; but the great question will be, What has become of their souls? What answer will you make to this? The heinousness of the sin in neglecting this is so great, that it is compared in Scripture to that of denying our faith itself. "If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 8. And if Christ will deny those who deny Him, what will He do to those who are worse than infidels? The man who received the one talent was condemned because he had not made good use of it: what would have been his condemnation had he lost or destroyed it? what if he had given it to his master's enemies? What, then, will be the fate of parents when, instead of improving the talent committed to their charge—a talent not of gold or silver, but immortal souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus—they actually ruin them, and give them over to the devil? (2.) As for their happiness in this life, the Scripture says, "The child that is left to his own will, bringeth his mother to shame," Prov. xxix. 15. And "a child left to himself will become headstrong. Give thy son his way, and he will make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall make thee sorrowful; . . . give him not liberty in his youth, and wink not at his devices. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is a child, lest he grow stubborn and regard thee not, and so be a sorrow of heart to thee," Ecclus. xxx. 8. How often do we see these Divine oracles verified in the world!

Children neglected fall into habits of vice, become obstinate and undutiful, and occasion great sorrow to their parents. What is more common than to see children who have been the idols of their parents becoming the cause of their greatest suffering? What torment must it be to parents if they see their children going to eternal perdition, while their conscience reproaches them for being themselves the guilty cause! If they have been diligent in performing their duty, this will be a comfort; but what must be the torture of their souls if they feel that they themselves are the unhappy cause which now hurries on their children to hell? How often does it happen that children fall into snares and miseries of different kinds, and involve their parents in their disgrace—God in His justice thus punishing the neglect of parents, even in this life, by means of their children themselves! From over-indulgence to his oldest son, what a host of evils befell David! Eli did not correct his impious sons, and it proved the utter ruin of his whole family.

Q. 11. What is the principal point that parents should attend to in discharging their duty to their children?

A. The most important thing that parents have to attend to is this, to regulate their love and affection towards their children. If this be done well, all will be easy; but if this be neglected, all will go to ruin—for without this, it will be next to impossible for parents to perform any part of what they owe to their children in a Christian manner. This, then, requires to be particularly explained. What we have said above, Chap. XIII., Q. 8, of the love of ourselves, is particularly to be observed here. There are two kinds of love which parents may have for their children—a natural love, by

which they desire to make them happy in this life—to see them living in ease, and enjoying the goods of this world—without concern or any serious thought of what is to become of them hereafter. The other is a supernatural love, or the love of charity, by which they wish indeed to see their children happy in this life, but much more in the life to come; and their principal aim is to make them good and virtuous, that they may save their souls. Now experience shows that parents have implanted in their hearts that natural love for their children. They wish them all manner of worldly happiness, and endeavour to procure it for them; they are happy when they see their children pleased, and grieved when they are in affliction and sorrow. This love is implanted in the hearts of parents by the great Author of Nature; and if kept in due subordination to the supernatural love of charity, produces the best results; but if left to itself, like all other natural affections it easily degenerates into passion, and proves the ruin both of children and of parents. To regulate this affection, parents must call to their assistance the love of charity, which will teach them that their chief view in loving their children ought to be the salvation of their souls; that this must be preferred to everything else, and that all must be endured and borne, rather than injure their souls. If this be laid down as the invariable rule to direct the love of parents for their children, all will be well; but if not, numberless evils will follow: for if they are guided only by the impulse of natural affection, this will easily degenerate either into passionate fondness or into unnatural harshness towards their children, from which the worst consequences must flow.

Q. 12. How shall parents know if they have too great fondness for their children?

A. There is nothing more common than for parents, especially mothers, to fall into this extreme of passionate fondness. And as in this they are not guided by reason or by grace, they are so blinded that it is almost impossible to convince them of their error: while others see that they are ruining their children by their fondness and over-indulgence, they themselves are persuaded they are acting well, and think they have good reason for what they do. It is therefore necessary to point out the signs by which they may discover their fatal mistake; and parents would do well to examine themselves impartially, that they may not deceive themselves upon a point on which their own and their children's good so much depends. (1.) This unhappy passion, like all other inordinate affections, blinds the understanding, and renders parents insensible to their children's faults; they can see nothing amiss in them, but all is well that they do. Charity, on the contrary, is a clear-sighted virtue; and when parents have sincerely at heart their children's salvation, they observe everything in them that has the least tendency to injure their souls. But when they are actuated only by a passionate fondness, this makes them see or care for nothing in their children but what concerns their present satisfaction. (2.) They are therefore displeased with those who have the charity to tell them of their children's faults; they refuse to believe them, and perhaps even make them a bad return for their charity. As their passion will not allow them to think their children capable of any fault, they are displeased that others should think differently; they would wish every one to have the same high opinion which they have. This shows the excess of blindness which this unhappy love occasions. Very different are the sentiments of those who have a sincere love of charity for their children.

They are grateful to any one who informs them of faults their children may commit when out of their own sight; they look on them as their real friends, and esteem them for doing so; because this enables them, by correction, to secure the main thing they have in view, their children's salvation. (3.) Parents who have this passionate fondness for children cannot bear to hear them cry, or to see them weep, and therefore they never have sufficient resolution to correct them. This is an evident sign of the excess of their passion, and shows that rather than put their children to a little pain here, they will expose them to the pains of hell hereafter. Not so with Christian parents who prefer their children's salvation to everything else. They well know that the vices of their children, if not corrected, will ruin their souls; and therefore they make little account of the present pain of necessary chastisement, which will contribute to make them happy eternally. (4.) From the same natural fondness it happens that such parents can never refuse their children anything they ask; and therefore they must be refused nothing, but must have their own will and their own way in everything, which is ruinous to a child. This, parents who love their children's souls well understand, and are therefore careful to teach their children to deny their own will, and to submit to the will of others. (5.) By such fatal indulgence, the children of those fond parents are not under their command, but the parents are ruled by them—an evident proof of the excess of their attachment. (6.) When parents allow their children to be disorderly and rude in their own presence, and overlook in them what they would condemn in others, this also shows clearly how deeply they are infected with that unhappy fondness for them.

Q. 13. What are the consequences of such passionate fondness in parents for their children?

A. The consequences of this are most pernicious; for, (1.) Children being thus accustomed to have their own way, contract such habits of obstinacy and wilfulness, that they cannot be contradicted in anything; they become stubborn and imperious; are never pleased but when they have their own will; nor is there peace in the family if they be thwarted. They must command, and every one must obey and honour them, otherwise there is nothing but fretting and discontent. (2.) It is a fatal impediment to the education of children. Such parents are themselves incapable of giving their children proper instructions. To instruct children is a task of no small difficulty; it is commonly necessary to use some compulsion, and this over-fond parents are in no way qualified to employ. If the children be sent to school, being accustomed to their own will at home, they know not what it is to obey their teachers, and therefore will learn only what they please. Teachers must not correct them, or if they do, the children complain to their foolishly-fond parents of bad treatment. This excites the parents against the teachers, and they withdraw them from school, and allow them to grow up at home in ignorance, idleness, and wilfulness. (3.) As nature, if not kept under, will soon break out into vicious practices, these unhappy children, thus accustomed to be their own masters, as they advance in years become a prey to their passions, and are exposed to be hurried on by them into crime. They daily become more and more self-conceited, impatient of reproof, advice, or admonition, and generally carry their vices with them to the grave.

Q. 14. What must be done to prevent these evils?

A. The cause of these evils being the inordinate love and fondness of parents for their children, the only remedy is for parents to remove the cause, and study to regulate their affection by what the supernatural love of charity dictates. This teaches them above all things to keep their children under command; and, whatever it may cost in the mean time, to make them perfectly obedient — for this will prove a source of good to their children; whereas their being slaves to their own will is the source of all their misery. Indeed there is perhaps no part of the duty of parents of such importance as that of keeping up their own authority and teaching their children obedience. It is the order of nature, the order of reason—it is the command of God—that children should be obedient to their parents; but it is the duty of parents to teach them to be so, and this they will never accomplish unless they accustom their children to it early. The pride of our heart makes us love to be our own masters; and this disposition shows itself almost as soon as we are capable of knowing anything. If indulged, it grows stronger and stronger, till at last it becomes unconquerable. Leave a horse at large, and under no command till he become old, and what will you then make of him? Our case is the same. Here the interest as well as the duty of parents is concerned, for in the great majority of cases the conduct of children who grieve their parents may be traced to their not having been accustomed to obedience and submission in their early years. It is a common observation that custom becomes a second nature; and therefore it is of the utmost consequence to accustom children from their tenderest years to be obedient and pliable, as this will be the most effectual means to give them good habits and dispositions

which will remain in after-life. The Word of God says, "Hast thou children? Instruct them, and bow down their neck from their childhood," Ecclus. vii. 25. "A horse not broken, becometh stubborn; and a child left to himself will become headstrong. Give thy son his way, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall make thee sorrowful. Laugh not with him, lest thou have sorrow, and thy teeth be set on edge. Give him not liberty in his youth, and wink not at his devices. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is a child, lest he grow stubborn, and regard thee not, and so be a sorrow of heart to thee," Ecclus. xxx. 8.

Q. 15. What rules ought parents to observe in order to teach their children obedience?

A. The following rules are to be observed for this purpose: (1.) When they give orders they must cause them to be obeyed, notwithstanding every opposition. If parents be firm on this point, and the child finds them resolute, it will soon become tractable; but if parents yield to a child's tears, this will increase its obstinacy on other occasions, teach it that the parents may be overcome, and consequently will make the lesson of obedience more difficult. Here it is important that parents mutually support each other. It often happens that when one parent orders anything to which the child is averse, it has recourse to the other, who supports it and takes its part; this is undoing all, and encouraging the child in obstinacy. Parents must be careful, if they wish the child's real good, to show it that it can never please the one if it do not cheerfully obey the other. (2.) When the child asks anything, and is impatient to obtain it, this is precisely the time when it ought not to be indulged, but be taught to moderate its desire, and wait

the parents' pleasure. This is of great importance—for, besides obedience, it teaches children self-denial; it leads them not to be too much attached to anything, and lays the foundation of solid virtue. (3.) When the parents give a child what it desires, they must never do so in compliance with its will, but as a favour, teaching the child to receive it as such, and to thank them for it. This has a great effect in bringing children by degrees to an entire dependence on the parents' will, and they may then mould it as they please. (4.) Above all things, parents ought never to seem pleased when a child does or says anything improper or contrary to orders; its obedience alone ought to receive their approbation: "Give thy son his way, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall make thee sorrowful. Laugh not with him, lest thou have sorrow, and at last thy teeth be set on edge," Ecclus. xxx. 9. (5.) Parents would do well to accustom children to frequent trials of obedience in little things, and to encourage them by some little rewards when they comply.

Q. 16. May not parents, by observing these rules, show too much harshness to their children?

A. Harsh behaviour in parents towards their children is both blamable and pernicious; but it is very different from the above rules. When parents are never contented with their children, but scold and chide them for the smallest fault—never give them encouragement, but on all occasions treat them harshly—they err, and such behaviour has often the most fatal consequences. Few indeed err on this side; but parents would do well to consider that such harshness is unnatural. God has implanted in all creatures love and tenderness towards their young; and He commands His rational creatures not to

extirpate this affection from their hearts, but to moderate and direct it. To act, therefore, in opposition to this, is to act against nature itself. Harshness greatly diminishes that affection and regard which children have implanted in them towards their parents; if they meet with nothing but signs of aversion and dislike, their love will cool, and the result may be the misery both of parents and children. It has the worst effects upon children themselves; it breaks their spirit, discourages them from good, makes their parents' company a torment, renders advice useless, and leads them to take the first opportunity to leave their parents, and expose themselves to the dangers of the world. And who will have to answer for such consequences before God? Parents, therefore, ought always to show love and tenderness, but never passion, for their children; even in teaching them necessary obedience by the above rules, they ought to act with mildness, but at the same time with firmness, convincing their children that it is only their real good which they have in view. Hence we find that the Word of God makes an important distinction between necessary discipline and harshness of behaviour, and while it condemns the latter, commands the former: "Fathers, provoke not your children to indignation, lest they be discouraged," Col. iii. 21. "And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord," Eph. vi. 4. And our Saviour, in the parable of the prodigal son, shows parents what ought to be their love and affection for their children.

Q. 17. What are the other duties of parents to their children?

A. To instruct them; to give them good example;

to watch over them; to correct them; and to pray for them.

Q. 18. How great is the obligation of instructing their children?

A. This is manifest from what we have seen above, Q. 10, No. 2, where it appears, also, that the things in which they ought principally to instruct them are the principles of religion and the law of God, and that these instructions ought to be given to them from their earliest years, according as their capacities open and enable them to receive them. Besides the reasons there given, this duty is strictly commanded in Scripture. "Hast thou children? Instruct them," Ecclus. vii. 25. "He that instructeth his son, shall be praised in him, and shall glory in him, in the midst of them of his household. He that teacheth his son, maketh his enemy jealous, and in the midst of his friends he shall glory in him," Ecclus. xxx. 2. "Instruct thy son, and he shall refresh thee, and shall give delight to thy soul," Prov. xxix. 17. God Himself informs us in what these instructions should consist: thus, "Forget not the words that thy eyes have seen, and let them not go out of thy heart all the days of thy life. Thou shalt teach them to thy sons, and to thy grandsons," Deut. iv. 9. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children," Deut. vi. 6. "Lay up these My words in your hearts and minds; . . . teach your children that they meditate on them," Deut. xi. 18. "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify to you this day; which you shall command your children to observe and to do, and to fulfil all that is written in this law: for they are not commanded you in vain, but that every one should live in them," Deut. xxxii. 46. And of

Abraham, God Himself says, "He shall become a great and mighty nation, and in Him all nations of the earth shall be blessed; for I know that he will command his children, and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and do judgment and justice," Gen. xviii. 18.

Q. 19. In what manner ought parents to instruct their children?

A. The Word of God points out this in a very striking manner, by some examples,—thus, (1.) "Tobias taught his son from his infancy to fear God, and abstain from all sin," Tob. i. 10. This, then, must be the foundation—this the first thing to be instilled into their tender minds, as soon as they are capable of knowing anything. To do this, parents ought to teach them to pronounce the sacred names of God and Jesus Christ with reverence, never speaking of God or Jesus Christ in their presence without respect. Children in their earliest years are not capable of understanding who God is; but when they hear their parents speak of Him with awe, this naturally impresses them with a high and reverential idea of Him. Parents, therefore, when they speak of anything good and virtuous in presence of their children, ought always to do so with esteem and approbation; and, on the contrary, when speaking of anything sinful, they ought to show every sign of abhorrence and detestation of it, as being the greatest of evils, taking care to mention the torments of hell as the place prepared for sinners. Such behaviour makes a deep impression on the tender minds of children; they naturally conceive that sin must be something very dreadful when they see and hear their parents speaking of it in such a manner; and this impression sinks into their minds, and, if properly cultivated,

produces the best effects. (2.) When Tobias's son was become older, the father gave him this instruction: "All the days of thy life have God in thy mind, and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord thy God," Tob. iv. 6. This shows parents that, when their children are a little older, they ought to instruct them in the knowledge of God, His infinite power, our obligation to serve Him, and especially of His being present everywhere, so that they can hide nothing from Him; and from these considerations cultivate the good impressions formerly given them of a horror for sin, and a fear of offending God. (3.) Tobias at the same time taught his son that we depend on God for everything; that He is the author of all good; that nothing can prosper without His blessing; and that we are bound to thank, praise, and pray to Him, saying, "Bless God at all times, and desire of Him to direct thy ways, and that all thy counsels may abide in Him," ver. 20; which shows how careful parents ought to be to instruct their children in the duty of prayer, to teach them to pray, and see that they perform that duty punctually. (4.) He also instilled into his son's mind a high idea of the virtue of charity and mercy towards those in distress, as the most assured means to move God to hear his prayers, and grant many great blessings to the soul. "Give alms," says he, "out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person; for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee: for thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity. For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer a soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the Most High to all them that give it," ver. 7-10. (5.) Of Susannah also we read that she was very beauti-

ful, yet she was "one that feared God;" and the reason is immediately added, "for her parents being just, had instructed her according to the law of Moses," Dan. xiii. 2. This shows that as children advance in years, parents ought to continue their instructions till they teach them their whole duty, and what the law of Jesus Christ requires. Wherefore, to discharge this important duty properly, parents must cause their children to attend the public instructions on Christian doctrine given by their pastors, assisting them at home to learn catechism, and causing them frequently, especially on Sundays and holidays, to read books of instruction, and such portions of the Holy Scriptures as are best adapted to their tender years.

Q. 20. How great is the obligation of parents to give good example to their children?

A. This is of so great importance that without it their best instructions will have little or no effect. Our nature is so formed, that men are much more ready to follow the example of what they see in others than the advices and instructions they receive from them. People who live in the same place, have the same customs, the same dispositions, the same manners; and why so? Because they learn from each other's example, which insensibly but powerfully engages their imitation. Besides, we are much more ready to follow the example of what is evil than of what is good, because the one favours our corrupt inclinations and passions, while the other is contrary to them. Now if this be the case with men in general, it is much more so with children. Of themselves, they are not capable of judging what is right and what is wrong, and therefore they act chiefly by imitation; and even when they are corrected for imitating anything wrong, they do not always immediately desist, the force of ex-

ample going farther to make them follow it than even the correction does to cause them to avoid it: but if the persons whom they imitate be their parents, this gives a greater sanction to what they do after their example; for nature has implanted in them such a respect, and such an esteem and veneration for their parents, that whatever they hear or see in them they think right, and believe it is what they may justly imitate. Hence if parents add good example to their instructions, and practise themselves what they teach their children, this cannot fail to produce the best of effects. But if they act otherwise, and their actions give the lie to their words, what is to be expected? What will the children do? They hear their parents telling them one thing, and they see them doing quite the contrary. This must necessarily destroy all the force of their instructions and advice; and as the example of parents makes a deeper impression on the minds of children than the instructions they receive, especially when the example is favourable to self-love, they will soon have reason or malice enough to think that if such a thing were evil, as their parents say it is, they would not do it themselves; that therefore they may do it also; and thus, forgetting the instructions, they will adhere to the example, perhaps to the eternal ruin of their souls. Hence it is manifest of what unspeakable importance it is that parents join good example to their instructions, and confirm by their behaviour what they teach by their words. And indeed to what purpose will it be that parents tell their children that they must not swear, yield to passion, speak bad words, nor omit their prayers, if on every occasion they themselves swear, give way to anger, use profane words, and never bow their knee to God? Will their children think their advice seri-

ous, or worthy of attention? Christ pronounces a dreadful woe on any one who scandalises little ones by leading them to sin; what must be the woe to parents if by their bad example they scandalise their own children?

Q. 21. In what manner ought parents to discharge their duty in watching over their children?

A. Parents are to their children what shepherds are to their flocks, guides and guardians: as, therefore, shepherds are obliged to watch over their flock, both to provide what is good and defend them from what is evil, so parents are obliged to watch over their children, and not only provide what is necessary for their souls, but also defend them from whatever may expose their souls to danger. This watching consists chiefly in two things—the first is, being careful that their children punctually perform those duties which the law of God requires. Although parents be diligent in giving their children good instructions, and even confirming them by good example, yet such is the natural bent of our heart to evil, that it will be difficult for children effectually to practise the instructions given them. We generally find no small difficulty in everything contrary to self-love, till practice renders it easy and agreeable. Wherefore to their good instructions and advices parents must also join vigilance and care, to see that their children actually do what they prescribe for them, that there may be no neglect, but that by habit and proper encouragement they may contract a liking to what duty requires. This ought particularly to be observed in regard to prayer, catechism, attending Christian doctrine, and spending the Sundays and holidays well. The second branch of this parental vigilance consists in being careful that their children be not exposed

to the danger of learning evil. This is of the utmost consequence; because, if children be exposed to see or hear what is evil, their natural tendency to imitate it will counteract in a great measure all their parents can do to teach them good. Wherefore, (1.) Parents ought to be careful what kind of servants they employ about their children, and never permit any servant to speak bad words in their presence without severe reproof. Many children have been ruined by servants, who by unchristian conduct have taught and encouraged them in wickedness. (2.) They must also be watchful of the company their children keep, and absolutely prohibit such as is bad, for "evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33. They must be careful that they read no bad or dangerous books; that they frequent no amusements by which their innocence may be imperilled,—for by these means many a soul is led to perdition. (3.) They ought also to watch over their dispositions, and observe any vicious inclination, in order to correct it at the beginning before it is strengthened by neglect.

Of this duty of parental vigilance the Scripture speaks as follows: "Hast thou daughters? have a care of their body," Ecclus. vii. 26. "On a daughter that turneth not away herself, set strict watch; lest finding an opportunity she abuse herself," Ecclus. xxvi. 13. The care of a good father in this branch of his duty is thus described: "The father waketh for the daughter when no man knoweth; and the care of her taketh away his sleep when she is young, lest she pass away the flower of her age; and when she is married, lest she should be hateful: in her virginity, lest she should be corrupted; and having a husband, lest she should misbehave herself. Keep a sure watch over a shameless daughter, lest at any time

she make thee become a laughing-stock to thy enemies, and a by-word in the city, and a reproach among the people, and make thee ashamed before all the multitude," Ecclus. xlii. 9.

Q. 22. What is the obligation of parents to correct their children?

A. To watch over their children, and observe any fault they commit, or any vicious disposition that grows up in them, would be to little purpose if the parents did not use the proper means to correct what is amiss, and root out the growing evil. To what purpose would a gardener visit his garden daily, and observe all the weeds that spring up in it, if he let them grow, and took no pains to destroy them? Now, as the evil inclinations and dispositions of children can be cured only by proper correction, it is of the utmost importance that parents be diligent in this branch of their duty.

In correcting children, great prudence is necessary, and gentle means are to be tried. Counsel and advice, showing the evil and threatening the punishment, should first be used; but if none of these suffice, recourse must be had to corporal punishment So great is our corruption, that it hurries us on to what is evil, even when we know the evil and see the danger; and unless we meet with present sufferings, the fear of pain to come commonly makes but too little impression on us. Even in grown-up people how often is this the case! But how much more in children who are not capable of judging between right and wrong, and have not a full knowledge of the evil? For them the rod must be at last the only certain means of correction; and hence we find the use of it frequently, recommended, or rather commanded, in Scripture. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, correcteth him

betimes," Prov. xiii. 24. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, and the rod of correction shall drive it away," Prov. xxii. 15. "Withhold not correction from a child; for if thou strike him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell," Prov. xxiii. 13. "He that loveth his son, frequently chastiseth him, that he may rejoice in his latter end," Ecclus. xxx. 1. This latter end is understood either of the son, who, corrected by the chastisements from his father, becomes a good man, and dies a good death; or is understood of the father, who will rejoice when he comes to die, both at having done his duty to his son, and in seeing the good effects in his virtuous behaviour. "Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is a child, lest he grow stubborn, and regard thee not, and so be a sorrow of heart to thee," Ibid., ver. 12.

Nothing more strongly shows how strictly Almighty God requires this duty from parents than the history of Heli the high priest. He was old and infirm; his two sons officiated for him as priests in the temple; they were wicked, did much evil, and greatly scandalised the people. All this came to the father's ears; he calls his sons and gives them a gentle reproof in these words: "Why do you these kinds of things which I hear, very wicked things, from all the people? Do not so, my sons, for it is no good report I hear," 1 Kings, ii. 23. But he went no further, nor used the authority he had both as their father and as a high priest to correct them and put a stop to their disorders. For this reason God sent a prophet, who in His name upbraided Heli with his ingratitude, considering all that God had done for him and his house, declaring that his neglect in correcting his sons was "honouring them rather than God,"

and therefore denounces these most severe punishments on him and his family: That his posterity should be rejected from the priesthood, and reduced to poverty; that there should be no old man among his posterity; and that his two wicked sons should die a violent death in one day. — See 1 Kings, ii. 29. All this, however, did not rouse the too indulgent father; and therefore, some time after, God appeared to the young prophet Samuel, and revealed to him that all the evils he had before told Heli would soon come upon him. "In that day I will raise up against Heli all the things I have spoken concerning his house. I will begin, and I will make an end. For I have foretold to him that I will judge his house for ever, for iniquity, because he knew that his sons did wickedly, and did not chastise them. Therefore have I sworn to the house of Heli, that the iniquity of his house shall not be expiated with victims nor offerings for ever," 1 Kings, iii. 12. And in fact all He had said was soon literally accomplished.

Q. 23. How do those parents who imitate Heli excuse themselves for neglecting to correct their children?

A. In one or other of these two ways: (1.) "That they have not heart to do it; they cannot bear to hear them cry, or to see them afflicted." But we have seen above that this is only the effect of a passionate and excessive fondness for their children, which has the most pernicious consequences; and it shows plainly how little regard such parents have for their children's souls, since they prefer their present ease to their future happiness, and rather than afflict them for a moment by wholesome correction here, expose them to eternal misery hereafter: according to that of the wise man, "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell," Prov.

xxiii. 14. Besides, it is the greatest folly in parents to yield to this natural weakness, and shows how little they know their own interest even in regard to present happiness; because to avoid one aching heart in correcting their children, which would bring a blessing to both, they lay the foundation of great misery and many an aching heart afterwards, when for want of necessary correction the children follow their own ways and are the cause of much affliction to their too indulgent parents. Heli, like such parents, would not correct his sons, from fear of displeasing them; but what a deluge of misery did this afterwards bring upon him and them, and upon his whole posterity!—all which would have been prevented had he corrected them as he ought. David, also, when his eldest son Ammon committed a wicked crime, neglected to correct so scandalous an action as it deserved; for the Scripture says, "He would not afflict the spirit of his son Ammon, for he loved him, because he was his first-born," 2 Kings, xiii. 21. But who can express the many miseries and heart-aches which David afterwards had to suffer from this parental indulgence?

(2.) But they say, "He is young—he knows no better; we must overlook many things in a child; he will acquire more sense afterwards, and amend when he becomes older." This excuse is very common, but is in reality a miserable delusion instead of an excuse. It is more dangerous than the former, as it puts on an appearance of reason; whereas the former is acknowledged to be the effect of passion and weakness,—although indeed they commonly go hand in hand, the former being the radical cause of neglecting correction, and this the apparent reason to palliate and defend it. Wherefore we must observe that there are many things in children which must be overlooked; but what are they? not

things that are vicious, or show any evil disposition of the heart; but such as are only childish, do not show malice, and which will naturally be overcome when they are older. "When I was a child," says St Paul, "I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away the things of a child," 1 Cor. xiii. 11. Things of this kind must be overlooked in children, and it would be folly to be constantly correcting them for such failings; but if the fault be immoral, or show a vicious disposition of the heart—as telling lies, speaking bad words, disobedience or stubbornness—it is the greatest cruelty to overlook such things, and let them pass uncorrected; and it is a dangerous mistake to imagine that dispositions of this kind will leave them as they advance in years. On the contrary, such is the unhappy corruption of the heart of man, "prone to evil from our youth up," that if these first germs of vice be not rooted out by proper correction, they will grow stronger and stronger by indulgence, and at last become incorrigible. "But," say they, "he is yet a child, and knows no better." It is true; but this is the very thing that makes correction the more necessary. If he knew the evil, and were capable of judging, admonitions and reasoning might do some good; but as that is not the case, there is nothing but the fear of the rod which can improve him; and therefore, because he knows no better, he ought to be corrected when he does amiss, that the smart of correction may teach him that the thing is bad, and deter him from doing it again.

Q. 24. In what manner must correction be given in order to be profitable?

A. There is nothing in which the prudence and good sense of a parent more appears, or is more necessary,

than in correcting children in a proper manner; and the want of these is the reason why we see so much correction in the world, and so little benefit from it. Two advices are most necessary on this head :—

1. That parents never correct their children in anger. Nothing is more common than passionate correction — when parents lose patience and self-command, swear, threaten, and at last beat them without mercy or reason. Is this correction? It is anger and passion, but by no means correction. It is not intended for the good of the children, but to satisfy the angry parents for the vexation their children give them. This will never improve the children, but probably make them worse; for, first, the blessing of God can never be expected on such correction, as by it the parents greatly offend God; secondly, such behaviour has much more the appearance of hatred than of love towards the children. They will easily see that it arises more from impatience in the parents than from any love to them, or desire of the good of their souls; and therefore this, instead of producing any amendment, will rather make them obstinate, sour their temper, and destroy all esteem and affection for their parents. Wherefore, when parents see it necessary to correct their children for any fault, let them (1.) Compose their own mind as far as possible, that what they do may be an act of reason and duty, not a burst of passion; at least let them be careful not to show any outward signs of passion to their children. (2.) Recommend the matter earnestly to God, that He may assist them to act properly, and give His blessing to what they do. (3.) Take their child aside, show him the fault he has done, and the evil of it, as far as his capacity can understand it, express their sorrow at being obliged to cor-

rect him, endeavour to convince him that it is against their inclination, and only for his good that they do it, and then give him calmly what correction they judge proper, assuring him he may expect worse if he does the like again, but their favour and countenance if he amends.

2. They must endeavour to proportion the correction to the fault. It is not easy to give a general rule for this. Much must be left to the prudence of parents according to the circumstances, but the following hints may be of service: (1.) Many mere childish faults are to be overlooked entirely, as we have seen above. (2.) In things that are rather mean and base than malicious, it will often be sufficient to shame children out of them. (3.) Disobedience to parents ought never to be suffered, even in small matters; but, cost what it will, they ought always to be made to obey. Parents must be prudent and cautious in giving their orders; but once given, they must be enforced. (4.) If children ingenuously confess their fault, and promise amendment, this may be a just reason for moderating the correction as a reward for telling the truth, or even remitting it entirely if it be the first fault, with a serious admonition not to repeat it; but if they be found to tell lies to excuse and conceal their fault, this ought never to be passed unpunished; for if they find that lies succeed, they will soon form a habit of lying in other things. (5.) If they begin to pick and steal, when discovered oblige them to make restitution with their own hands, and on their knees to ask pardon. (6.) Speaking bad words also ought to be severely corrected.

Q. 25. Are parents strictly obliged to pray for their children?

A. This is the most important duty of all, because everything else will avail little or nothing without it.

Let a gardener be ever so assiduous in cultivating his garden, and sowing good seed, yet if it be not watered with the dew of heaven, all he does will profit nothing. So also, though parents be ever so exact in all the above duties for cultivating the souls of their children, yet if the blessing of God do not accompany their endeavours, all will be to no purpose. "Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God that giveth the increase;" and "except the Lord build the house, in vain they labour that build it." Hence the principal care of parents must be to draw down the blessing of God upon their children; for obtaining which every Christian knows that frequent, fervent, and persevering prayer is the most powerful and efficacious means. They ought, therefore, daily to offer up their children to God, as being His property, and only intrusted to their care, and beg Him to preserve these souls which He bought at so dear a rate: they ought to acknowledge to Him with all humility their inability to perform these duties, and implore His assistance. The blessed Virgin, as soon as she was allowed by the law to enter the temple of God, took her son Jesus in her arms, and made an offering of Him there to His eternal Father; and of Job we read, that rising up early he offered up sacrifices and holocausts to God for every one of his children, lest they might have sinned and offended God. These are examples recorded for the imitation of parents.

Q. 26. What consequences flow from what is said above with regard to parents themselves?

A. That parents ought to be good Christians themselves: (1.) Their charge is great; their duties as parents are many and difficult, and their own salvation, as well as that of their children, depends upon their performing them well; consequently they stand in great

need of help from God, which they cannot expect if they live not in His friendship. (2.) Parents are exposed to many dangers of ruining their souls, not only from the neglect of the above duties, but also from the many temptations they meet with in providing necessaries for their children as to this life, and from the trials and crosses they meet with in their family. Now, to escape these dangers, and overcome these temptations, great virtue and powerful help from above are required. (3.) It is impossible for them to discharge some of these duties without being good Christians—such as giving good example, &c. (4.) The virtue and happiness of children depend in a great degree on the piety and virtue of the parents; for "the just man that walketh in his simplicity shall leave behind him blessed children," Prov. xx. 7; but "the children of sinners become children of abomination; . . . the inheritance of the children of sinners shall perish, and with their posterity shall be a perpetual reproach," Ecclus. xli. 8.

Q. 27. What are the sins of parents which are forbidden by this command?

A. Everything contrary to the above duties, but especially these following: (1.) Teaching or encouraging their children in anything evil, either by word or by example, and particularly instilling into their tender minds worldly maxims and sentiments of pride, vanity, love of dress, revenge, and the like, which is too often done by parents who have it more at heart to make their children friends of the world than friends of God, and who, by encouraging in them the natural propensities of self-love, lay a sure foundation for their eternal ruin. (2.) Bringing up their children in a false religion, or exposing them for worldly motives to the danger of losing their faith. This is a species of cruelty which one

would scarcely think could exist among Christians—more to be deplored than that of Herod in murdering the holy innocents, for he only murdered their bodies; but such unchristian parents, for the sake of the world, murder their children's souls: nor is there anything in the whole Scripture to which it can be compared but the barbarity of those people who "sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils; and they shed innocent blood: the blood of their sons and of their daughters, which they sacrificed to the idols of Chanaan," Ps. cv. 37. But of such the Lord says, "If any man . . . give his seed to the idol Moloch, dying let him die: the people of the land shall stone him. And I will set My face against him: and I will cut him off from the midst of his people; because he hath given of his seed to Moloch," Levit. xx. 2. Now Moloch is one of the names by which the devil was worshipped among the people of Chanaan. (3.) Using unjust means to procure riches for them; for this never fails sooner or later to bring the curse of God upon themselves and their children, and to destroy their families even to the foundation, according to the prophecy of Zacharias, who saw a book flying, and the angel told him that "this is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the earth, and every thief shall be judged as is there written. And I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall come into the house of the thief; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and it shall consume it with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof," Zach. v. 1.

Section III.

Of the Duties of Servants.

Q. 28. Is the condition of a servant favourable to eternal salvation?

A. One of the chief causes why servants are unhappy in their state is, that they are in it against their will; they consider it a misfortune to be obliged to engage in it, and therefore are not contented. Indeed we need not be surprised at this when we see that commonly we form our judgments of things more from the suggestions of self-love than from the rules of the Gospel. Sloth cannot bear to submit to hard labour; our love of liberty rebels against being bound to the will of another; pride rises against a state which is so much despised by the world: but were servants to take religion for their guide instead of these enemies of our salvation, they would soon be convinced that there are few states of life so favourable to happiness as theirs. (1.) They are certain that it is the will of God for them to be in that state, and that He has placed them in it as the best in which to work out their salvation. When people have it in their own power to choose a state of life, they seldom consult the will of God—their self-love, pride, ambition, desire of ease or of riches, are their only counsellors. But when persons are obliged to be servants, they may be sure it is nothing but the providence of God that wills it. It is not sloth, pride, nor ambition—it is not the choice of their own will, but the necessity in which Almighty God has placed them, that obliges them. Now this is of vast advantage for salvation; for being there by the will of God, they will receive more abundant

graces; it will be more easy for them to save their souls, and their reward will be greater if they apply their heart to their duty, and co-operate with the views of Providence.

(2.) In this more than in any other state of life they have it in their power to imitate Jesus Christ, and become perfect followers of Him, because their very state and condition have a great resemblance to that which He chose for Himself while upon the earth; for He, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but debased Himself, taking the form of a servant," Philip. ii. 6; and He declares Himself that He "came not to be served, but to serve," Mat. xx. 28. And as to poverty, humility, obedience, and labour, what servant ever had more of them than Christ had? Hence, therefore, as in their state of life they so much resemble Him, it becomes an easy matter for them to resemble Him also in their souls. If a rich person desire to imitate Him, how difficult is the task! He must either sell all he has, and give to the poor; or, if he continues to possess his riches, he must take off his heart from them, and use them as if he used them not. How difficult is it in the midst of honours to imitate the humility of Jesus! Oh for one who is his own master to practise obedience! (3.) Their state of life even lays them under the happy necessity of practising some of the most necessary Christian virtues by which they most resemble their Saviour—as *humility;* for their state of life is one of humility and subjection, and exposes them to many humiliations, and to be employed in mean and humble offices. *Penance;* for all the labours and toils of their state is a penance laid upon them by God Himself, who says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou earn thy bread." And *obedience*, to practise which is the essential

quality of a servant. So that, being obliged to the practice of these virtues by the duties of their state of life itself, they have only to sanctify them by performing them in a Christian spirit in order to obtain from God great grace and benediction to their souls. (4.) Their state is also a preservative against many sins to which rich persons, and those who are employed in gaining riches, are exposed, particularly solicitude and anxiety about temporal concerns, pride, covetousness, forgetfulness of God, and all the sins which flow from idleness.

(5.) One of the greatest advantages of the state of servants is, that they may be always certain of doing the very thing which God wills in all the various duties of their state. To do the will of God is the great end of our being, the perfection of our soul; it is a source of peace and happiness to our mind here, and the only passport which will gain us admittance into heaven hereafter, as Jesus Christ Himself assures us: "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," Mat. vii. 21. Now to do the will of God two things are required: first, that what we do be the very thing that the will of God requires; and, secondly, that our motive for doing it be obedience to His will. Of these two, the great difficulty lies in knowing what it is that God requires from us upon every occasion; for if once we be certain of this, it is easy to sanctify our intention by doing it for His sake, and purely because He wills it. It would therefore be a great happiness if we could always know precisely what is pleasing to Him. Those who are their own masters are often at a loss to know this, even though they desire it; they are in danger of

mistaking the subtle suggestions of self-love for the will of God; and if they be in a state of life to which God has not called them, but in which their own passions and worldly motives have engaged them, they can scarcely be certain of doing the will of God in any of their ordinary actions. But with servants this is not the case. They are placed in that state by the will of God, and they know that every lawful thing they do in their master's service, and in obedience to his commands, however trifling or mean in itself, is the thing which God expressly wills; so they have only to sanctify what they do by considering it as the will of God, and offering it up in obedience, in order to make all they do pleasing to Him, and of the utmost benefit to their own souls. The Scripture is clear and beautiful on this head: "Servants, be obedient to your masters; . . . not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with a good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men," Eph. vi. 5. "Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ," Col. iii. 23.

(6.) Servants will be more mildly dealt with by the Divine justice than those of a higher station of life, and that for several reasons; for if they have received fewer talents of the goods of this life, they will have less account to give, for "from him to whom much is given, much will be required." If they have less knowledge of other Christian duties not connected with their state, and if their very state of life itself hinders them from being so fully instructed in all the law of God, they will be less severely punished than those who know better when they transgress it; "for that servant who knew the

will of his lord, . . . and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes," Luke, xii. 47. They have no charge of others, as masters, parents, and those in authority have, and consequently have to account only for themselves. Besides, their state of life affords them great opportunity of doing penance for the faults they commit, and consequently of satisfying the Divine justice before they leave this world. On all these accounts the Scripture says, "A most severe judgment will be for them that bear rule; for to him that is little, mercy is granted, but the mighty shall be mightily tormented," Wis. vi. 6.

Q. 29. What are the duties which servants owe to their masters?

A. They are all reduced to these three heads—justice, obedience, and respect.

Q. 30. What are their duties of justice?

A. Justice is a duty which we owe to all men, and consists in giving to every one his own. The transgression of it is, of its own nature, a mortal sin, which can only be excused by the smallness of the matter. Injustice obliges those who are guilty of it to restitution, if they are able, without which the sin will never be forgiven. But servants are in a particular manner obliged to be just towards their masters; because in their case, besides the common duty of justice due to all, there is either an explicit or implicit contract of fidelity by which they are bound; and their masters trust their goods and work to them accordingly. Hence the Scripture says of this duty, "Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters; . . . not defrauding, but in all things showing good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," Tit. ii. 9. And a glorious

reward is promised them by our Lord : "Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord has set over his family, to give them meat in season? Blessed is that servant, whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Amen, I say to you, he will set him over all his goods," Mat. xxiv. 45. This justice or fidelity obliges servants to these duties : (1.) Not to wrong their masters in their goods, either by appropriating, giving them to others, or wasting them —and that neither in little nor great matters; for our Saviour says, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater," Luke, xvi. 10. Again, He says, "If the evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth to come; and shall eat and drink with drunkards : the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for him, and at an hour that he knoweth not; and shall separate him, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxiv. 48. (2.) Never to see their masters wronged by others without resistance, otherwise they become partakers of their crime. By the fidelity they owe their masters, they are obliged to use their endeavours to protect them from wrong, and to make it known if necessary, to prevent fraud or recover what has been lost. (3.) To be diligent and careful in doing the work assigned to them, and in improving the goods committed to their care, whether their masters be absent or present, remembering that though not seen by men, they are seen by God, to Whom they must give an account, and be rewarded or punished accordingly.

Q. 31. What is the duty of servants with regard to obedience?

A. Obedience is the essential duty of a servant, of which the Scripture speaks thus: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling in the simplicity of your heart, as to Christ. Not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but, as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With a good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good things any man shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free," Eph. vi. 5. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance," Col. iii. 22. "Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, in all things pleasing, not gainsaying," Tit. ii. 9. In these clear testimonies of holy writ, the obedience of servants is fully laid down; for there we see, (1.) The greatness of the duty, as being expressly commanded by God, and declared to be the serving of God Himself. (2.) The extent of it, in all things—that is, in all their master's lawful commands, particularly in what regards the nature of the service for which they are engaged. (3.) The manner of doing it—namely, without stubbornness, gainsaying, or contradiction, but in simplicity of heart, as unto Christ Himself, and with a good will. (4.) The intention they ought to have in their obedience,—doing their duty as the will of God; doing service to God; fearing God. (5.) Their reward for it, which is the kingdom of heaven, as their inheritance to be received from the Lord.

Q. 32. What is the respect that servants owe to their masters?

A. On this duty the Scripture says, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling," Eph. vi. 5. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thanks-worthy, if, for conscience towards God, a man endure sorrows, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if committing sin and being buffeted for it you endure? but if doing well you suffer patiently, this is thanks-worthy before God. For unto this you are called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps; Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not," 1 Pet. ii. 18. "Whosoever are servants under the yoke, let them count their masters worthy of all honour, lest the name of the Lord, and His doctrine, be blasphemed. But they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but serve them the rather because they are faithful and beloved, who are partakers of the benefit," 1 Tim. vi. 1. In which words we see, (1.) The greatness of this duty, and how strictly servants are commanded to fear, respect, and honour their masters, since the neglect of this brings a reproach upon our Lord Himself, and upon His doctrine; and consequently, that those servants who act contrary to this duty are a disgrace to their religion.

(2.) Servants are obliged to show this respect to their masters, even though they treat them in a harsh and disagreeable manner,—"not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." (3.) That even when treated ill, though innocent, they must "for conscience towards God endure sorrows, suffering wrongfully,"

imitating the example of Christ; and that God will reward them; for Christ suffered for us all: but in this point He leaves an example of suffering unjustly to servants in particular, to whom the above passage of St Peter is addressed. Oh how happy were it for Christian servants to meditate night and day on this golden sentence of that great apostle, and have it deeply imprinted in their heart! but oh how contrary to this is the behaviour of many servants nowadays! (4.) That when their master reproves them for any fault, they must not give way to passion, and use bad language, for this would be a contempt of God Himself, whose authority their master bears; but if innocent of what is laid to their charge, declare their innocence—and if guilty, acknowledge their fault, ask pardon, and promise amendment. When Saul, in anger, threw his dart at David, he withdrew from his presence, and applied to Jonathan to vindicate his innocence. Joseph chose rather to be cast into prison than attempt his vindication with his enraged master and mistress, from an accusation of which he was innocent. But when Abraham's servant, Agar, behaved disrespectfully to her mistress Sarah, and fled from her, the angel of God appeared to her and said, "Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hand," Gen. xvi. 9. (5.) That they must be careful never to show disrespect to their masters when absent, either by words or gestures; never to speak ill of them, nor expose their failings or imperfections, but rather to take their part and defend their character when attacked by others. (6.) That they must never reveal the secrets of the family, so as to expose it to censure and contempt.

Q. 33. What duties do servants owe to their fellow-servants?

A. The great end which servants ought to have in view with their fellow-servants is, to preserve peace and charity: with this, their life will be a life of happiness; without it, one of misery. Now, to maintain this peace, the following duties are required: (1.) Never willingly to give cause of offence to their fellow-servants, either by words or actions; (2.) Never to take offence, but to bear with Christian meekness and patience whatever is said or done against themselves; endeavouring to receive it with patience as from the hand of God, and to behave with mildness and affection towards those who do it. "A mild answer breaketh wrath, but a harsh word stirreth up fury," Prov. xv. 1. "A sweet word multiplieth friends and appeaseth enemies," Ecclus. vi. 5. "A wise man in words shall make himself beloved," Ecclus. xx. 13. (3.) To be ready to assist one another in everything. "By charity of spirit serve one another," Gal. v. 13. "The members of one body are mutually careful one for another," 1 Cor. xii. 25. "If I, being your Lord and Master," says Jesus Christ, "have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also," John, xiii. 14. (4.) Never to say or do what can sow discord among their fellow-servants, and much less between them and their masters. Nothing indeed is more common, and nothing is more pernicious than this. "The tale-bearer shall defile his own soul, and shall be hated by all; . . . the silent and wise man shall be honoured," Ecclus. xxi. 31. (5.) Never to enter into debates or disputes with their fellow-servants about trifles, for this never fails to create ill-will. "The servant of the Lord must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men," 2 Tim. ii. 24. "Do not contend in words, for it is to no profit," 2 Tim.

ii. 14. "It is an honour to a man to separate himself from quarrels," Prov. xx. 3. "Refrain from strife, and thou shalt diminish thy sins," Ecclus. xxviii. 10.

Section IV.

The Duties of Masters to their Servants.

Q. 34. What are the Scripture maxims by which masters ought to regulate their conduct towards their servants?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) That their authority over their servants is from God, for "there is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God," Rom. xiii. 1; Who by the overruling disposition of His blessed providence, raises some to a higher station in life, and keeps others in a lower, according to His pleasure. Hence servants are commanded to obey their masters, as "they would Christ Himself, and as to the Lord, and not unto men." (2.) That God has given them authority not so much on their own account, as for the benefit of those under their charge, as is the case with kings, magistrates, pastors, or parents. (3.) That they shall be called to a strict account how they use this authority; and will be severely punished if they abuse it. "Power is given to you," says the Scripture, "to all in authority, by the Lord, and strength by the Most High, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts. . . . Horribly and speedily will He appear to you; for a more severe judgment will be to them that bear rule. For to him that is little, mercy is granted; but the mighty shall be mightily tor-

mented. For God will not accept of any man's person, neither will He stand in awe of any man's greatness; for He made the little and the great, and He has equal care of all; but the greater punishment is ready for the more mighty," Wis. vi. 4.

(4.) That all mankind are but one family before God, the common Lord of all, to Whom all are accountable, and that those in authority are only higher servants of this common Master: for, as St Paul says to masters, "Both you and they have a Master in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him," Eph. vi. 9. Our Saviour therefore declares, that if in this great family he who is in a higher station, and has the care of others, shall become an evil servant, and say, "My lord tarrieth in coming; and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with drunkards; his lord shall come, . . . and shall separate him, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxiv. 48; for "if any man has not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 8. (5.) That the laws of humility and brotherly love, essential to a true Christian, ought in a particular manner to be exercised towards servants. After Jesus Christ had washed His disciples' feet, He said, as a lesson for all His followers, "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also. Amen I say to you, the servant is not above the master; neither is the apostle greater than He that sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do

them," John, xiii. 13. Also, " The princes of the Gentiles lord it over them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister, and he that will be first among you shall be your servant," Mat. xx. 25. This is the idea which the Gospel gives us of the Christian spirit of authority, and Jesus Christ Himself is proposed as the model which all in power among His followers ought to copy. (6.) That a servant who is a good Christian and truly fears God is a treasure, and brings a blessing to the family where he lives; and that a wicked servant, who offends God, is a means of bringing a curse on those among whom he dwells. Thus, when Joseph was servant to Pharaoh's officer in Egypt, " The Lord blessed the house of the Egyptian for Joseph's sake, and multiplied all his substance, both at home and in the fields," Gen. xxxix. 5.

Now from these Scripture principles the duties of masters to their servants will easily appear; for, as masters are themselves but higher servants in the family of God, the common Master of all, and have received the charge of others from Him, the duties which they owe to their servants may be reduced to the same general heads as those of a steward in a great man's family—namely, to take care of them, and to treat them according to the will of their common Master Who is in heaven.

Q. 35. What are the duties of masters of families with regard to the service of their heavenly Master?

A. (1.) To see that their servants faithfully perform their duties to God, particularly in their prayers, in spending the Sundays and holidays well, in frequenting the holy sacraments; and to allow proper time for these duties, and for their instruction in religion. Our heavenly master requires these duties from servants as well as from others, and therefore as masters

of families are but stewards in the family of God, they are obliged to see that those under their inspection faithfully perform His work. Their own interest also concurs to engage them to this, because the better Christians and the better instructed their servants are, the better servants they will be to them, and the greater blessing will they bring upon their families. (2.) To be careful in reproving and correcting, whenever their servants say or do anything offensive to God. A steward in a great man's family is obliged not only to see that the servants under him faithfully perform what they owe to their common master, but also that they do nothing against his interest or offensive to him. And indeed it seems strange that a master of a family should use all the weight of his authority to reprove and correct his servants for any fault committed against himself, and yet be silent when they offend and insult God, his and their common Master! (3.) Good example in the above Christian duties, particularly in having daily family prayers, will have the greatest weight to excite and encourage them to good; whereas bad example will have the contrary effect, notwithstanding all the advice and reproofs they can give them. (4.) To pray for them, after the example of the good centurion, who had recourse to Jesus Christ with so much fervour for his suffering servant.

The great commendation which God Himself gave to Abraham, as the reason why He chose him to be the one from whom the Redeemer of the world should come, was, because "I know that he will command his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do judgment and justice," Gen. xviii. 18, 19.

Q. 36. What is the treatment which our heavenly Master requires of masters to their servants?

A. The last question contained the duties of masters

to their servants' souls; this regards their duties towards their bodies; and these are, (1.) To treat them with mildness and humanity as their fellow-Christians. This is a necessary consequence of the Christian maxims for the conduct of masters, which we have seen above. The Scripture also commands the same, and enforces this duty by this most powerful motive; that masters are but upper servants in the family of God, to whom the whole belongs, and who "has equally care of all," and will undoubtedly call masters to an account of their treatment of those under them: "And you masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatenings, knowing that the Lord of both them and you is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him," Eph. vi. 9. Treatment of this kind gains the affections of servants, attaches their hearts to their masters, preserves peace, and makes them happy: whereas contrary conduct in masters has the very opposite effect. This mildness ought to appear chiefly in giving their orders in an easy, humane manner, not with imperiousness and contempt; and in reproving or correcting in such a manner as to convince servants that it is duty and regard for their welfare, but by no means passion, which moves them to it; and they ought to avoid reproving them for every slight mistake. Servants are flesh and blood as others, have their weaknesses, and therefore masters and mistresses must allow the necessary indulgence for human nature, and see many failings without always appearing to observe them: hence the Scripture says, "Be not as a lion in thy house, terrifying them of thy household, and oppressing them that are under thee," Ecclus. iv. 35. (2.) To treat them with justice: "Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you also have a Master in heaven," Col. iv. 1. This justice consists in giving them

wholesome and sufficient food, and in exactly paying their wages. "The wages of him that has been hired by thee shall not abide with thee until the morning," Levit. xix. 13. "Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor; . . . but the same day shalt thou pay him the price of his labour, before the going down of the sun, because he is poor, and with it maintaineth his life; lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be imputed to thee for a sin," Deut. xxiv. 14. Tobias also gives this advice to his son: "If any man hath done any work for thee, immediately pay him his hire, and let not the wages of thy hired servant stay with thee at all," Tob. iv. 15. And St James assures us, that to do otherwise is a sin that cries to heaven for vengeance: "Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth," James, v. 4. (4.) To treat them with great gratitude. Where a servant behaves well, has an interest in and affection for his master, and has been a long time in his family, certainly more than strict justice is due to him, as a grateful recompense for his services. The Word of God is clear on this point: thus, "Hurt not the servant that worketh faithfully, nor the hired man that giveth thee his life. Let a wise servant be dear to thee as thy own soul; defraud him not of liberty, nor leave him needy," Ecclus. vii. 22. "If thou hast a faithful servant, let him be to thee as thy own soul; treat him as a brother," Ecclus. xxxiii. 31. In these words we see that masters ought to treat good and faithful servants above what strict justice may demand. Let them be dear to thee as thy own soul; treat them as brothers; defraud them not of liberty; leave them not needy. Hence, in time of sickness, or when old age approaches, or if any

misfortune should come upon them; then is the time to show particular care of them, and to give them necessary relief and assistance.

Section V.

The Duties of Married People.

Q. 37. Is it of importance to instruct married people in the duties of their state?

A. Nothing is more so, for the married state is ordained by Almighty God as the means for the propagation of mankind, and on that account most men at one time or other engage in it; and as their happiness in that state depends upon their fulfilling the duties of it, it is therefore highly necessary that they be properly instructed. The duties annexed to the state of matrimony are commanded by God Himself; the eternal happiness of married people, as well as their temporal felicity, depends upon their faithful observance of them, and this cannot be expected unless they know them well. Indeed, if the duties of the married state be exactly complied with, it becomes an emblem of heaven itself, and conducts to that happy place at last; but on the contrary, if these duties be neglected, the married state is one of misery here, and leads to eternal misery hereafter. There is therefore scarcely any branch of Christian duty which those who have the charge of souls ought to explain and inculcate more frequently than the duties of husband and wife, and the obligation of faithfully performing them.

Q. 38. What are the Scripture principles on which these duties are founded?

A. These will be seen from the description which the Scriptures give of the institution and nature of the holy state of matrimony. Of this we are told that at the creation of the world "The Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul. . . . And the Lord God said, It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a help like unto himself. . . . Then the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon Adam; and when he was fast asleep, He took one of his ribs, and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord God built the rib which He took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh," Gen. ii. 7, 18, 21.

From this account, given by God Himself, the following truths flow: (1.) That two persons being joined in marriage, are no longer to be considered as separate, or different from one another, having separate views, designs, or interests, but as two joined in one—that is, joined in the strictest bond of union that possibly can exist between two persons in this world; so that man and wife ought to look upon each other as parts of themselves, "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," as members of one another, joined together in the same flesh. (2.) So strong is this union that no power on earth can dissolve it; "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife." It is the work of the most high God, and nothing but death can break it. This our blessed Saviour declares in the Gospel, where, referring to the account of the institution and nature of marriage given by Moses, he concludes in

these words, "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," Mat. xix. 6. See this point fully discussed in the *Sincere Christian*, Chap. XXVII. Q. 7.

(3.) The woman was created to be a help to the man. This the Word of God expressly declares in these terms: "And the Lord God said, It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a help like unto himself." St Paul also confirms the same: "The man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; for the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man," 1 Cor. xi. 8. This, then, was the original design of Almighty God, that the woman should be a helper to the man, and she was created for that end. But this is so to be understood, that the husband also must be a help to the wife; that it is the will of God that this assistance should be mutual; and that as the wife serves and helps the husband in things which he could not well do himself, so the husband also is obliged to serve and assist her in things which she could not well perform. This is what St Paul declares, adding to what he said above,—"But yet neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord: for as the woman is of the man, so also is the man by the woman," ver. 11; to teach us that, although the first man was created immediately by the hand of God without the woman, yet in all their posterity man could not have his being "but by the woman,"—"and therefore, being equally necessary for one another's existence," they have a mutual dependance upon, and ought mutually to help, each other. (4.) Though they are thus created for each other, and for mutual assistance, yet the husband has the chief power; he is the superior, and has authority over the wife, who is subject to him. This follows from

their very first formation, and therefore St Paul says, "But I suffer not the woman to use authority over the man; for Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not seduced; but the woman being seduced, was in the transgression," 1 Tim. ii. 12. This subjection was expressly confirmed by God Himself, in punishment of her transgression, when He said to Eve, "Thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee," Gen. iii. 16. Hence St Paul concludes: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife," Eph. v. 22. (5.) That the principal object which married people ought to have, is to make each other happy in this life, and much more in the life to come. "It is not good," said Almighty God, "for man to be alone;" and therefore, in order to promote his good, God made the woman to be a help to him; and as the design of God in uniting them together was their mutual good, they ought to comply with the gracious design of their Creator, and to promote their mutual happiness. To be happy here, and much more to be happy hereafter, is what all desire and aim at. This is a principle implanted in our breasts by the Author of our being. While persons remain single, they have to think only of acquiring this happiness for themselves, except what the common duty of charity requires towards mankind in general; but when two are joined in marriage they become one flesh, members of one another, and are strictly bound to wish and promote each other's mutual happiness. "Men," says St Paul, "ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself," Eph. v. 28. Now to love one is nothing else but to wish and promote his happiness.

These are the sacred principles, founded on God's

Holy Word, from whence all the duties of the married state flow, and which may be divided into two classes—namely, those duties which tend to promote the happiness of the married parties in this life, and those which contribute to secure their mutual happiness in the life to come. But it must be observed that these two classes of duties serve to promote the ends they mutually have in view; for whatever tends to make married persons *Christianly* happy in this world, serves also to promote their eternal salvation; and whatever makes them happy for eternity, contributes also to their happiness in this life.

Q. 39. What are the duties of married persons necessary for promoting their happiness in this life?

A. When we consider the strict union between married people, which nothing but death can dissolve, it is evident that the best means of promoting their common happiness in life must be to preserve peace and concord between themselves. Where peace is wanting, and discord and dissension reign, there happiness cannot dwell. If two single persons disagree and quarrel, they injure their own happiness; but they have a remedy: they may separate and be happy with other people. But in the married state this may not be done; for, though they should separate, the bond of marriage still remains entire, and prevents them from forming any new connection.

If worldly prosperity abounds with married people, discord imbitters all the sweets of wealth; but union and concord double their enjoyments, and enhance the value of prosperity. On the contrary, if they meet with crosses and misfortunes, peace and concord alleviate their afflictions; but discord and dissension increase their sufferings, and make them miserable indeed! Married persons ought therefore to study to preserve peace and concord,

sacrificing every selfish feeling to this important end. On this the Scripture says, "With three things my spirit is pleased, which are approved before God and man: The concord of brethren, the love of neighbours, and man and wife that agree well together:" Ecclus. xxv. 1. Connected with this there are three classes of duties: the first is common to both, the second is proper to the husband, and the third belongs to the wife.

1. The first is, that they ought to have a mutual love for one another "according to God." The command which Jesus Christ lays on all His followers, to love one another, obliges in a particular manner those who are joined together in marriage; for though the duty of loving our neighbour rests ultimately in our love for God, yet there are many other subordinate motives to enforce it, which are not all found equally in every neighbour; and where these exist in greater numbers, there God Himself commands us to have a stronger love, and to be more diligent in the exercise of it. Now, between married persons there are some particular motives to mutual love which are to be found nowhere else, from which the Scripture concludes how great ought to be their love for one another: "Husbands, love your wives," "as Christ also loved the Church." . . . "Men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ does the Church," Eph. v. 25. In these words we see how strictly this mutual love between married people is commanded, and the particular motives upon which it is founded. (1.) Marriage is an emblem or figure of the union which Jesus Christ has with His Church; hence, that it may be a true figure, a real emblem, it is absolutely required that the husband love his wife, as Christ loves His Church;

that is, from the same motives, and for the same ends, with a sincere love of charity, or a love according to God: and, of course, that wives return a mutual love of the same kind to their husbands, as this is a mutual duty.

(2.) "Husbands ought to love their wives as their own body," because they are no longer two, but one flesh, and no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; and as they are mutually members of one another, not in a mystical or figurative sense only, as is the case with our other neighbours, but really united together in one flesh, "bone of bone, and flesh of flesh," therefore this love must be so much the stronger between them. (3.) "He that loveth his wife loveth himself." Married persons must look on one another not only as members of themselves, but as their very selves; and therefore ought to have the same love for one another as for themselves. We are commanded, indeed, to love our neighbours in general as we love ourselves—that is, after the manner that we love ourselves, and with the due proportion, according to the order of charity; but the apostle declares that the love required between married people is of a superior order, for they are bound to love one another as they actually love themselves; so that every act of love they show to each other is actually loving their very selves, because they are no more two, but one flesh.

To these reasons we must also add another; that without this mutual love it will be impossible for married persons to preserve peace and to be happy. They may indeed have a sensual passion for each other, which tends only to the gratification of their lusts; but as this is wholly a selfish affection, it can never produce the happy effects of peace and concord. The character

which the Scripture gives of charity is, that it is "patient, is kind, seeketh not its own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. xiii. 4; that it makes us "bear one another's burdens," Gal. vi. 2; and "with mildness and patience support one another," Eph. iv. 2; "bearing one another, and forgiving one another," Col. iii. 13.

Where such a love as this exists, there peace and harmony must dwell: for this love teaches, never designedly to give cause of displeasure to others; not to be rigorous in exacting what is agreeable to ourselves, or what we may think our due; not to give way to anger and passion when anything is done against us; to condescend to the weaknesses and imperfections of others; to bear their infirmities with mildness and patience; to be ready to forgive;—in a word, to bear and forbear. If all this be faithfully complied with, how can dissension enter? Married people must therefore remember that none are without faults, weaknesses, and imperfections; that there are many failings and inequalities of temper to which the very best are subject, and which do not appear before marriage, but are soon discovered afterwards. They must therefore expect to meet with such things, as the same will also be discovered in themselves. The only remedy is, a true love for each other according to God; that is, to consider that God commands them to love each other with a love of charity, and to behave towards each other, for God's sake, according to the rules which, as we have just seen, that love of charity prescribes, as contained in the characters given of it by St Paul.

2. The second class of duties necessary for promoting the happiness of the married state, contains the part which the husband ought to act, and consists in exercising the authority which God has given him, in the

manner which the law of God requires. In every community, when those who have authority use it with discretion and mildness, those who are subject cheerfully obey, and peace and concord reign: but wherever superiors exceed the limits of their authority, or exercise it with harshness and severity, the worst consequences follow. This observation is justly applicable to husband and wife.

By the law of God the husband is head of the wife, and has authority over her; but this authority is given for their common good, and must be exercised according to God's law. We cannot have a better idea of the nature of this authority, than from the example of Jesus Christ towards His Church: "The husband," says St Paul, "is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church." And therefore the way that Christ exercises His authority over His Church is the best model of the way that husbands ought to act towards their wives. Now we find throughout the whole Scripture, that Jesus Christ is always represented as governing His Church with meekness, sweetness, and love, and abundantly supplying her with all necessaries for her welfare. Sometimes we see Him, as a skilful and wise physician, treating her infirmities with compassion and tenderness; sometimes, as an indulgent father, bearing with the imperfections of His children; sometimes, like the good Samaritan, by the most charitable beneficence gaining the hearts even of His enemies. Such also ought to be the conduct of husbands to their wives; with compassion and tenderness endeavouring to conceal their failings; like an indulgent parent, bearing with their infirmities of temper; and in all cases showing that a tender love and real desire for their good is the only motive of their conduct.

The husband, then, must remember that his authority over his wife is not that of a master over slaves, nor even that of a father over his children; but is the authority which the head has over the members of the body, or which Christ has over His Church; consequently he has no right to maltreat, abuse, or to show aversion and bitterness towards her, either in words or actions. Hence the Scripture says, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter towards them," Col. iii. 19. St Peter enforces this duty by two strong reasons: "Ye husbands likewise give honour to the weaker vessel, and as to the co-heirs of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." Consider that God has given you superiority over them, not only in authority, but also in fortitude and strength of mind, in knowledge and other respects, and therefore you ought to honour them as the weaker vessels, by a more tender love and greater condescension for them, remembering also that they are co-heirs with you of eternal life; besides that otherwise, if you treat them with harshness, your prayers will not be heard of God; for if you show not the necessary compassion towards the wife of your bosom, how can you expect that God will show mercy to you? This last argument is strongly urged by God Himself, as recorded by His prophet: "I have no more a regard to sacrifice, neither do I accept any atonement at your hands. And you have said, For what cause? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, whom thou hast despised; yet she was thy partner, and the wife of thy covenant. Did not one make her, and she is the residue of His spirit? And what doth one seek but the seed of God? Keep then your spirit, and despise not the wife of your youth," Mal. ii. 13. To this we may add, that the faults of the

husband in this point are often the chief source of the unhappiness attending the married state; especially if to this be joined neglect of providing for his family, and squandering his time and money in idleness, gaming, or drinking, while his wife and children are left in poverty and suffering. This is a most heinous crime; for "If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 8.

3. The third class of duties regards the wife, and requires that she should behave to her husband with respect, obedience, and deference. If it be the husband's duty not to exceed the bounds of his authority, but to exercise it with lenity and discretion, it is no less the duty of the wife to respect his authority, and submit to it with cheerful obedience. This the very nature of subordination requires, and the model proposed to wives for the exercise of this duty is the Church of Christ; that therefore they should consider their husband's authority as coming from God Himself, and behave with submission to him on that account, as to the Lord. "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; . . . as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things," Eph. v. 22. Now the Church obeys her heavenly spouse, not from servile fear, as slaves obey their masters, but from love and affection. She fears Him, indeed, she respects Him as her Lord and her God, a God of infinite majesty; but the grand motive of her obedience is ardent love. This makes her cheerfully submit to His commands, endeavour in all things to please Him, and spare no pains to promote His honour and glory. In like manner ought the wife to behave towards her husband; she must respect and

honour him. "Let the wife fear her husband," says the Word of God, Eph. v. 33. She must readily comply with his will and lawful commands; she must study to please, and make everything agreeable to him. "Let the wives be subject to their husbands," says St Peter; "whose adorning, let it not be in the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel; but in the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. For after this manner heretofore the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters you are, doing well, and not fearing any disturbance," 1 Pet. iii. 1. Where we see that wives must not be extravagant in expensive dress and gaudy attire, but study to adorn their hearts with a quiet and meek spirit, yielding obedience and respect to their husbands in words as well as in acts. Instead of squandering their husbands' goods, they must apply with diligence to the care of their affairs, managing and improving their temporal concerns to the best of their power. This is their office; in this they are properly a help to their husbands, by taking care of things at home, while the husband is providing for them and their families by his labour abroad. Hence the Scriptures say of a good wife, "The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils; she will render him good and not evil all the days of her life," Prov. xxxi. 11. See that whole chapter.

Q. 40. If married people would faithfully observe these sacred duties which the law of God enjoins, they could not fail to be happy; but if either of them act contrary to these duties, what must the other do?

A. When discord and disagreements arise in married

life from the fault of one party, the other frequently acts imprudently, though pleading necessity as an excuse. Thus the husband who ill-treats his wife, pleads her temper, language, and irritating conduct, and says that he is obliged to use severe correction, and to treat her roughly. The wife, on the other hand, to palliate her undutiful behaviour to her husband, has recourse to a similar excuse, and perhaps adds that he is never at home, throws away his money in company and drinking, and leaves her and her family in poverty. But when either party fails in the duties which the law of God requires, harsh and severe behaviour is not allowable, however self-love may seek to justify it—nor would even prudence itself approve of it, if consulted impartially, and not through the mist of passion. The pretended correction used in such cases is often only the effect of impatience, and carries the person beyond the bounds of reason; consequently it is offensive to God, both in its source and in the means it uses. Experience teaches that it never does good, but much harm. It irritates, excites passion, creates aversion and hatred, and banishes peace.

Where married people disagree there are commonly faults on both sides; for however much the one party may fail in duty, it is certain that if the other has prudence, and bears with these failings meekly and patiently, as the law of God commands, extremes may be avoided. And if to patient suffering is added loving behaviour, and fervent prayers to God, a happy change may be brought about: and hence the Scripture says, "If a woman have a tongue that can cure, and likewise mitigate and show mercy, her husband is not like other men," Ecclus. xxxvi. 25. And the same holds true of a husband. But should this not be so, there are two other remedies remaining for the innocent

person : first, to receive this cross as sent from the hand of God for the sanctification of his soul, and to bear it with resignation to the Divine will ; and, secondly, if things become so bad that he cannot bear them without danger to soul or body, he may have recourse to a separation from the offending party ; provided, however, that this be done with proper deliberation by lawful authority, and after other means have been tried. Separation on private authority is never allowed by the laws of God and His Church, except in cases of extraordinary danger either to soul or body, and where the civil authority cannot be had recourse to. On this the Word of God speaks thus : "To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband ; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife," 1 Cor. vii. 10 ; which clearly shows that it is not lawful to separate by their own authority.

Q. 41. What are the duties required of married people for promoting mutually their eternal salvation ?

A. We have considered the duties of married people as divided into two classes, as they more immediately tend to promote their temporal and eternal happiness ; yet as all these duties are imposed by the law of God, obedience to His law is the surest means to promote real happiness in this life as well as in the next, according to the words of our Saviour, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you." Hence it is that all the duties of married people which are conducive to their present happiness are equally necessary for promoting their eternal salvation. If they fail in mutual love by hatred, aversion, or ill-will—if the husband use his authority with harsh-

ness and severity, despise his wife, and neglect the care of his family—or if the wife refuse the subjection she owes to her husband, attempt to usurp his authority, be obstinate in her own will, and provoke her husband by her language—in such cases the offending parties transgress the law of God, and not only injure their own soul, but by bad example and provocation become the occasion of sin in their partners, and contribute to ruin their souls. But by the exact performance of all the above duties they both please God and draw down His blessing upon soul and body, promoting their eternal as well as their present happiness. Besides these, the following duties more especially regard the good of their souls :—

1. They must not permit their love to go to excess, for however much they are obliged to love one another, this love has its proper bounds; and they sin not only when they fail in the necessary love they owe to each other, but also when they carry their affection beyond those limits which the law of God prescribes. Married persons must remember, therefore, that though they are bound to love each other, they are bound to love God more, otherwise they can have no part with Him. Christ Himself assures us, that if we love any one more than Him, we are not worthy of Him; but that, if for His love a man leave his wife or other worldly objects, he shall receive an eternal reward. He even declares, that whosoever "does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, yea, and his own life also, cannot be His disciple," Luke, xiv. 26—that is, whoever does not love all these so much less than God, that he is ready to part with them all rather than offend Him, cannot be His disciple, nor have any part with Him. Hence, if married persons, by persuasion, or from fear of displeasing their partner, do anything against the law of God, this

is a clear sign that their love runs to excess, and that they love each other more than God.

The following examples will illustrate this: When Adam, rather than displease Eve, ate the forbidden fruit, Almighty God showed that this preference constituted the great guilt of his sin: "Because thou hearkenedst to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work," &c., Gen. iii. 17. Of Solomon we are told that "he loved many strange women. . . . And when he was now old, his heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord. . . . But Solomon worshipped Astorthe the goddess of the Sidonians, and Moloch the idol of the Ammonites. . . . And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his mind was turned away from the Lord the God of Israel," 3 Kings, xi. 1. Of Achab, king of Israel, it is recorded "that he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. . . . And he took also to wife Jezabel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went" (*to please her*) "and served Baal and adored him. . . . And he did more to provoke the Lord the God of Israel, than all the kings of Israel that were before him," 3 Kings, xvi. 30; for which the Scripture gives this sad character of him: "Now there was not such a one as Achab, who was sold to do evil in the sight of the Lord," 3 Kings, xxi. 25; and then immediately adds the cause, "for his wife Jezabel set him on!" He loved his wife more than his God! and rather than displease her he abandoned his God and the true religion, and became an idolater! So also Ananias and his wife Sapphira agreed to retain part of the price of their land, and to conceal it; on which account St Peter said, "Why have you agreed together

to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" Acts, v. 9; and they were both struck dead in an instant! How contrary to these was the behaviour of Job! for when his wife, overwhelmed by the sufferings which had come upon them, advised him to offend God and die, rather than endure such wretchedness, he reproved her in these words, "Thou hast spoken like one of the foolish women;" and he inviolably persevered in his innocence, for "in all these things Job did not sin with his lips," Job, ii. 10.

2. They must give each other good example, and pray for their mutual happiness and salvation. Of all the means we can use for the good of our neighbour's soul, there is none more excellent than these; they are also most powerful, and cannot be objected to by others. All are commanded to live good lives, not only for their own sake, but also for the edification of others. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven," Mat. v. 16. We are also commanded to pray for all men: "I desire therefore first of all," says St Paul, "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all men; . . . for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour," 1 Tim. ii. 1. Now if common charity to the souls of all men oblige us to these duties, the nearer our connection is with the soul of any individual, the more this obligation increases in his regard; and consequently it is urgent on married persons, as none can have so close a connection as they. These duties of prayer and good example are, above all, necessary when one of the parties leads a bad and sinful life. Suppose, for example, that the husband is given to company, drinking, or gaming; and when at home is always disagreeable, and a torment to his family. This is one of the most severe trials to a wife: but

what must she do? If she follow the suggestions of passion, she will only injure her own soul, and make matters worse. Indeed much of the unhappiness of married life may be ascribed to the want of prudence and forbearance in the wife, who, when her husband does anything amiss, gives way to passion, excites his anger, renders her company disagreeable, and in a manner forces him to seek elsewhere that satisfaction which he does not find at home.

But must she bear all his ill-treatment, as if she had neither sense nor feeling? must she submit to see herself and children reduced to misery, and say nothing? No, far from it. It is her duty to use every prudent means to reclaim her husband; the question only is as to the manner of doing it. If experience shows that harshness and passion, instead of proving a remedy, only increase the evil, does not common-sense, as well as the law of God, condemn that method? What, therefore, the law of Christ, and the spirit of His religion, require from her, is, (1.) To consider this trial as sent by Divine providence, and to endeavour to sanctify it by patience, humility, and resignation. (2.) To use every effort to gain her husband's affections by mild and submissive behaviour, that she may lead him to feel pleasure in her company; and this she can do if she commands her temper, and, as the Word of God expresses it, "has a tongue that can cure and mitigate." (3.) At a proper time let her endeavour to convince him of the evil of his ways, not by complaining, but with gentleness, and showing more concern for the danger of his soul than for her own sufferings. If, however, this is not taken in good part, let her not persist, but await a more favourable opportunity. (4.) Above all, she must frequently offer fervent prayers for his conversion, and

endeavour to render them agreeable to God by a life of piety and virtue. Let her never forget, that though she hates her husband's evil ways, she is bound to love his person; and that the change of his heart must come from God. If she persevere in this, Almighty God will reward her piety and crown her wishes by the conversion of her husband; or if He permits the trial to continue, she may expect a great reward in heavenly glory, and will have the consolation of knowing, that if their worldly affairs are ruined by her husband's misconduct, she has not been the guilty cause by provocation. This line of conduct has always been followed by the holy servants of God, and there are many remarkable examples of its good effects.

As this is an interesting subject, we shall relate the following examples from the Rev. Mr Butler's *Lives of the Saints*. St Monica, mother of the great St Augustine, as soon as she was marriageable, was disposed of to one Patricius, a man of honour and probity, but an idolater. She obeyed and served him as her master, and laboured to gain him to God; though the chief argument she used whereby to reclaim him from his vices was the sanctity of her conduct, enforced by an affectionate, obliging behaviour, by which she commanded his love, respect, and esteem. She tolerated the injuries done to her marriage-bed in such a manner as never to make him the least bitter reproach on that subject. As, on the one hand, he was very good-natured and loving, so, on the other, he was hasty and choleric. Monica never thwarted him by the least action or word while she saw him in anger; but when the fit was over, and he was calm, she mildly gave him her reasons, and an account of her actions.

When she saw other wives bearing the marks of their husband's anger on their disfigured faces, and heard them blaming their roughness of temper or debaucheries, she would answer them, "Lay the blame rather on yourselves and your tongues." . . . She bore all his follies with patience and silence, made no other return than that of greater obsequiousness, and waited an opportunity to make him sensible of his mistake, when that was necessary; . . . and one of the happy fruits she gained by her patience was her husband's conversion to Christ; who thereupon became chaste, and faithful to all the duties of a good Christian."

Another similar example we have in St Elizabeth, who was married to Dionysius, king of Portugal. "Though he was a friend of justice, and a valiant, bountiful, and compassionate prince, yet he was in his youth a worldly man, and defiled the sanctity of the nuptial bed with abominable lusts. The good queen used all her endeavours to reclaim him, grieving most sensibly for the offence to God, and the scandal given to the people; and she never ceased to weep herself, and to procure the prayers of others for his conversion. She strove to gain him only by courtesy; and with constant sweetness and cheerfulness cherished his natural children, and took great care of their education. By these means she softened the heart of the king, who, by the succour of a powerful grace, rose out of the filthy puddle in which he had wallowed for a long time, and kept ever after the fidelity that was due to his virtuous consort."

To these we shall add, from the same pious historian, the example of St Margaret, queen of Scotland, and wife to Malcolm III. "Malcolm was rough and unpolished, but neither haughty nor capricious. Margaret, by the most tender complaisance, and the most condescending and

engaging carriage, always full of respect, gained so great an ascendant over him as to seem entirely mistress of his heart. . . . She softened his temper, cultivated his mind, polished his manners, and inspired him with the most perfect maxims and sentiments of all Christian virtues; so that he became one of the most virtuous kings that had ever adorned the Scottish throne." These examples show the Christian conduct which married people ought to observe.

3. They must preserve inviolably the sanctity of the marriage-bed. "Let marriage be honourable in all," says the Word of God, "and the bed undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge," Heb. xiii. 4. On this subject we shall only observe, that of all the causes of spiritual ruin in the married state, none is more pernicious than nuptial infidelity; for adultery is one of the greatest crimes, and is expressly forbidden by the law of God. (1.) It is a grievous profanation of the sacrament of marriage, and divides in a criminal manner what God has joined together in one flesh. (2.) It is a grievous injustice to the innocent party; for, "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband; and in like manner also, the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife," 1 Cor. vii. 4. It is a much more grievous injustice than stealing; for, "The fault is not so great when a man hath stolen; . . . but he that is an adulterer, for the folly of his heart shall destroy his own soul," Prov. vi. 30. (3.) It contains a grievous breach of the vow of mutual fidelity, made before God, and in the face of His Church, and which is essential to marriage. (4.) If discovered, or even suspected, by the other party, it creates discord, destroys peace, occasions suspicion, jealousy, and altercation, and is a great means of bringing both husband and wife to

eternal misery. See more of this on the sixth command. We shall conclude with observing, that the commandment prohibiting adultery not only forbids the actual crime itself, but every lustful thought, word, or action towards another's person; for the words of Christ Himself to all in general may be applied in particular to married persons, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart," Mat. v. 28.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Q. 1. WHAT is the fifth commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not kill," Exod. xx. 13.

Q. 2. What is the general end of this commandment?

A. It is to direct us in those duties which regard the preservation of our own or of our neighbour's life and person, whether as to soul or body.

Q. 3. How so?

A. As the commandment does not say, "Thou shalt not kill another, but says in general, "Thou shalt not kill," therefore it forbids to kill any human creature, whether ourselves or others. Again, by "to kill" is understood not only the actual taking away of life, but also all such actions as have a tendency to do so by injuring the person; and as we may injure another either as to the life of his body or of his soul, this command equally forbids both. Lastly, according to the explanation given by our blessed Saviour of this commandment, it also forbids all those feelings and passions from which such acts proceed; for he says, "You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the

judgment: but I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment," Mat. v. 21, 22. Now, as anger is the first motion of the will to hurt our neighbour, and killing him the greatest injury, and as both are forbidden by this command, all intermediate degrees also are forbidden.

Q. 4. What, then, are the particular sins forbidden by this commandment?

A. (1.) Such as either take away life, hurt the body, or tend to do so,—as murder, fighting, quarrelling, and dissension. (2.) Such affections or passions as lead to them, particularly anger, envy, or hatred. (3.) Such actions as kill, or tend to kill, the soul—namely, scandal and bad example.

Q. 5. What are the duties enjoined by this command?

A. The works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, particularly (1.) pardon of injuries, (2.) almsgiving, and (3.) brotherly correction.

Section I.

Murder, Quarrelling, &c.

Q. 6. Is murder a grievous sin?

A. It is one of the most grievous injuries we can commit against our neighbour, for, (1.) It is a sin that cries to heaven for vengeance, as God Himself declared to Cain. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth. Now, therefore, cursed shalt thou be upon the earth, which hath opened her mouth, and received the blood of thy brother at thy hand," Gen. iv. 10. And the souls of those that were slain "cried

with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?" Rev. vi. 10. (2.) In consequence of this, God Himself has declared that He will be the avenger of this sin. "I will require the blood of your lives at the hand of every beast, and at the hand of every man; and of his brother will I require the blood of man: for whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed; for man was made to the image of God," Gen. ix. 5. (3.) God strictly commands this crime to be punished with death. "He that striketh a man with a will to kill him, shall be put to death. . . . If a man kill his neighbour on set purpose, thou shalt take him away from my altar, that he may die," Exod. xxi. 12. (4.) It is a great injury done to God by destroying His image; and this is the reason He Himself gives for so strictly avenging it, especially as it is done contrary to His will, and against His express command. It is a usurpation of the authority which belongs to God alone; it not only deprives our neighbour of what is most valuable to him in this world, but it also endangers the eternal loss of his soul.

Q. 7. Is there any one kind of murder more grievous than another?

A. Most certainly. (1.) Premeditated murder, or that which is intended and designed beforehand in cold blood, as that of Cain, is much more grievous, and shows greater malice, than murder arising from sudden passion. (2.) Murder committed under the cloak of justice, as the murder of Naboth by Jezabel, where false witnesses were employed to swear to his guilt, is still more grievous, because it is an abuse of justice attended with perjury. (3.) The more valuable the life of the person killed, the more grievous

the murder; hence the murder of superiors and those in authority is a crime of a most grievous kind. (4.) The more sacred the person, especially if he be in authority, as pastors of the Church, and kings, the more grievous the murder. (5.) The nearer the person murdered is connected in blood to the murderer, the more grievous the crime; hence the murderer of parents, children, husband, wife, brothers, sisters, or other blood relations, has always been regarded with particular horror and detestation.

Q. 8. What kind of crime is that of women with child, who, to conceal their shame, do things to cause abortion?

A. This is a most detestable crime; it is a real murder if the child be quick, which, according to some late discoveries, happens much sooner than is commonly imagined. It is a murder of one's own child! and, what is more deplorable, the murder of the soul as well as the body, for, by preventing the child from being baptised, it is for ever excluded from the kingdom of heaven. Hence we see the crime of those who give or advise women to take or do anything to procure abortion: and how careful women ought to be to avoid everything that might cause them to miscarry.

Q. 9. Is self-murder a grievous sin?

A. It is certainly one of the most grievous kinds of murder. (1.) It is directly against the command of God, which says in general, "Thou shalt not kill." (2.) It is totally subversive of the principle of self-preservation, so deeply imprinted by nature in the heart of man; and it shows that the reason is perverted or blinded by unnatural passions, when a man can deliberately act in opposition to so powerful a principle; as we see in Achitophel, who, from wounded pride, hanged himself,

because his advice had not been taken. This is the only example of the kind in the Old Testament, 2 Kings, xvii. 23. (3.) It usurps an authority which belongs only to God, the sole master of the life of man; for man is the keeper of his own life, but not the master of it. Self-murder destroys the image of God against His express command. (4.) It is commonly the effect of despair, or some other criminal passion, and is followed by the eternal destruction of the soul in hell-fire; as in the case of the unhappy Judas, who betrayed his Master, and then hanged himself in despair,—the only instance of this crime in the New Testament.

Q. 10. Why is fighting, quarrelling, and the like, forbidden by this commandment?

A. Disputes, contentions, strife, quarrelling, and fighting, are all expressly forbidden by this commandment; because injurious to our neighbour's person, as well as to our own, and also to the mind, by causing vexation, and exciting anger and hatred. They have a natural tendency to murder, and experience shows that murder has often arisen from such beginnings; for "as the vapour of a chimney and the smoke of the fire goeth up before the fire, so also injurious words, and reproaches, and threats, before blood," Ecclus. xxii. 30. Besides, such behaviour is directly contrary to the spirit of charity, concord, and brotherly love, which our blessed Saviour strictly requires in all His followers, and of which He has given us so glorious an example.

Q. 11. What judgment, then, ought a Christian to form of these sins?

A. One very different from the judgment of the world. (1.) As those sins are directly contrary to charity and the love of our neighbour, the arguments and motives

for charity show how detestable they are before God. (2.) The testimonies of Scripture, which recommend the practice of meekness, humility, and patience under injuries, show the obligation, not only of avoiding contention, but even of suffering wrong rather than keep up strife and discord. In fact, the Scriptures expressly say, "Why do you not rather take wrong? why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" 1 Cor. vi. 7. "It is an honour to a man to separate himself from quarrels; but all fools are meddling with reproaches," Prov. xx. 3. (3.) The sacred Scriptures lay it down as a sign of our being Christians, that we avoid all such works of darkness. "The night is past, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy; but put you on the Lord Christ," Rom. xiii. 12, 13; where we see that contention and envy, as well as drunkenness and impurity, are classed among the works of darkness, quite contrary to the spirit of Jesus Christ. What is meant by putting on Christ, the apostle shows in these words: "Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience; bearing with one another, forgiving one another," Col. iii. 12. And exhorting us to unity, he brings this reason: "For God is not the God of dissension, but of peace; as also I teach in all the churches of the saints," 1 Cor. xiv. 33. Hence he assures us, "If any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the Church of God," 1 Cor. xi. 16.

(4.) Almighty God Himself declares that strife and contention destroy the value of our good works, even of fasting itself. "Why have we fasted," said the people

of Israel to God, "and Thou hast not regarded?" To which God answers: "Behold, you fast for debates and strife, and strike with the fist wickedly. Do not fast as you have done until this day, to make your cry to be heard on high. Is this such a fast as I have chosen?" &c., Isa. lviii. 3. (5.) Finally, the Word of God declares that all these things are the works of the flesh, of their own nature mortal sins, and for ever exclude from heaven. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are . . . enmity, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions: . . . of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 19, &c.

Section II.

Anger, Envy, and Hatred.

Q. 12. What is anger?

A. When we see or hear anything which we consider an injury either to ourselves or others, and feel displeasure in our breast against the offender, with a desire of punishing him for the injury done, this is anger. It is divided into two kinds: just and laudable anger, and unjust and sinful anger.

Q. 13. What do you mean by just and laudable anger?

A. When the cause of our displeasure is just, and the disturbance in our breast is moderate and subject to reason, and the punishment we desire is proportioned to the offence, both in quantity and the manner of inflicting it. Lastly, when we desire the punishment

not from ill-will to the offender, but for the sake of justice, his amendment, and to prevent future injury. This is just and laudable anger, is called zeal, and is a duty strictly enjoined on those who have authority over others. Thus, when parents see misconduct in their children, are displeased at it, and with calmness and moderation correct them, this is a just anger, for want of which Eli, the high priest of God, was severely punished.

Q. 14. What is unjust and sinful anger?

A. When any of the above conditions is wanting—that is, when there is not a just cause; or when the displeasure of our minds exceeds due bounds, and becomes a passion; or when the punishment we wish to inflict is above measure, and disproportioned to the offence; or when we wish it from revenge, and the pleasure of seeing the offender suffer, more than from love of justice,— then our anger is vicious and sinful, and the more these circumstances concur, the more criminal our anger is. The sinful anger is called "an inordinate love or desire of revenge,"—such as the anger of parents and masters, who upon every slight offence or mistake of their children or servants give way to passion, cursing, swearing, and threatening evil to them.

Q. 15. What is, properly speaking, a just cause of anger?

A. An injury may be done either to God or man. Now, according to the spirit of Jesus Christ and His holy religion, we ought never to be deliberately displeased at any injury done to ourselves, but ought to endeavour to bear all with patience, meekness, and resignation to the will of God, using the lawful remedies or preservatives with calmness and mildness, as we have seen, Chap. XIII. sects. 2 and 3. But if we have that love of God which duty requires, we must be grieved

and displeased when we see Him offended by sin; both on account of the offence offered to Him, and the evil done to the soul of the offender. Hence, properly speaking, sin is the only just cause of zeal or holy anger, according to the spirit of Jesus Christ and of His holy religion. Thus we see that Jesus Christ bore all the injuries done to Himself without emotion against His enemies; but when He saw His heavenly Father offended by the profanation of His holy temple, He manifested the greatest zeal, making a scourge of cords, and driving out the profaners.

Q. 16. Is passionate anger, or an inordinate desire of revenge, a great sin?

A. It is of its own nature a deadly sin. (1.) Because it is directly contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, which inculcates meekness, patience, and submission to the will of God under all injuries or crosses. (2.) Because Jesus Christ expressly declares, that he "who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment;" and he who carries his anger so far as to call his brother opprobrious names, and wish evil to him, "shall be in danger of hell-fire," Mat. v. 22. (3.) Because it is the source of many other sins, as oaths, curses, blasphemies, reproaches, dissensions, enmities, and murder itself,—as in Saul, when in his anger he put to death eighty-five innocent priests of God; and in Herod, when he murdered the holy innocents, &c. (4.) Because anger or wrath is numbered by St Paul among the works of the flesh, which exclude from heaven, Gal. v. 20; where it is classed with idolatry, witchcraft, lust, and such deadly crimes.

Q. 17. What is envy?

A. It is a repining or uneasiness of mind at our neighbour's good, whether of soul or body.

Q. 18. Is envy a grievous sin?

A. It is. (1.) Because it is directly contrary to the love of God. The love of God requires that we should rejoice when He is glorified, and consequently, when He bestows His gifts and favours, which display His goodness and bounty, and excite men to love Him. Now envy is grieved at His goodness to others, finds fault with the dispensation of His gifts, and repines at His bounty. (2.) It is opposed to the love of our neighbour, which causes us to rejoice at his good, and sympathise with him in his misfortunes: "Rejoice with them that rejoice," says St Paul, "and mourn with those that mourn;" but envy does the reverse—rejoices at their misfortunes, and mourns at their good. Charity considers our neighbours as our brethren, as members of Jesus Christ, and therefore makes us rejoice in their good; envy repines and is sorry for their good, as if they were members of Satan. (3.) It is the source of many other crimes, particularly of hatred and malice: hence the envious are always ready to judge rashly, to censure and condemn their neighbours, to put the worst construction on their words and actions, and to slander and calumniate them. They are generally whisperers and tale-bearers, and seek to set others against those whom they envy; they endeavour to do them evil, and take a malicious satisfaction in any ill that befalls them. They are sometimes hurried on to the most shocking crimes; witness Cain, Joseph's brethren, Saul, in what he did against David, and the Pharisees against Christ. (4.) It is a diabolical sin, and those who are guilty of it belong to the devil; for the Scriptures say, "By the envy of the devil death came into the world, and they follow him who are of his side," Wis. ii. 24. (5.) It is numbered by St Paul among the works of the

flesh, which exclude from heaven," Gal. v. (6.) It is often most severely punished by God even in this life, as in Cain, Moses' sister, Corah, Saul, Daniel's persecutors, and others, as recorded in the Holy Scripture.

Q. 19. Is it a grievous sin to hate our neighbour?

A. It certainly is of its own nature a most grievous sin. (1.) Because directly opposed to charity, or the love of our neighbour, in all its branches. (2.) Because it is directly opposed to the love of God, which obliges us to love our neighbour for His sake, as His image, His creature, His child, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and designed to enjoy God for ever. "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?" 1 John, iv. 20. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer hath life eternal abiding in himself," 1 John, iii. 15. Also, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes," 1 John, ii. 11.

Section III.

Almsgiving.

Q. 20. What do you mean by almsgiving?

A. The relieving the bodily wants of our neighbour out of our worldly substance.

Q. 21. Are we entire masters of the goods of this world which we call our own, such as riches, lands, and the like?

A. With regard to other men we are, because the well-

being of society, and the order of good government, require that each individual should be secured in the full possession of that portion of the goods of life which he lawfully acquires, or which naturally descends to him, and that no one should be allowed to disturb him in the use of them. But with regard to Almighty God the case is different; for He is the very sole and absolute Master of us and of all we have or possess, and can do with us and our goods whatever He pleases. With regard to Him, therefore, we are only stewards of that portion of worldly goods which we enjoy, and we are obliged to use them as He commands.

Q. 22. How do you show this?

A. To a Christian scarcely any proof is needed; but proofs are not wanting. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: the world, and all they that dwell therein," Ps. xxiii. 1. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts," Hag. ii. 9. "The land is mine," says Almighty God to His people; "you are strangers and sojourners with me," Levit. xxv. 23. "The Most High ruleth over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will," Dan. iv. 22, 29. "The blessing of the Lord maketh men rich," Prov. x. 22; for "Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God," Ecclus. xi. 14. "What have you which you have not received?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. This shows that God is sovereign master of whatever we possess, and that we are obliged to use the goods of this life according to His will; and that we shall be called to a strict account for the use we make of them, is manifest from the parable of the talents, Mat. xxv., and the punishment of the unprofitable servant. The more we possess of these things, the greater shall our account be; for "of him, to whom much is given, much

will be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more," Luke, xii. 48. The same also appears from the parable of the unjust steward, who was called to account and removed from the stewardship for having wasted his master's goods.

Q. 23. Why has Almighty God distributed the goods of this world in so unequal a manner among men?

A. For several reasons. (1.) For the greater union of society, that all, having a mutual dependence on each other, might be linked together with the greater love as members of one body. (2.) For exciting men to industry and labour, in order to earn their bread, He leaves some in poverty; and He gives others riches that they may have wherewith to support those whose industry and labour is useful to them. (3.) As the great end of the Divine Providence, in His dispensations to men, is the salvation of souls, He places some in poverty, that by patience, humility, and resignation, they may sanctify themselves and secure salvation; and He gives riches to others, that by charity and almsgiving they may do the same. These He makes the stewards of His family, and to them He commits His goods in abundance, that out of that abundance they may supply the wants of all his poorer servants; and He declares that what they do to the least of His brethren, He esteems as done to Himself.

Q. 24. Does God absolutely command the rich to give alms to the poor?

A. He certainly does; for this, besides being included in this fifth commandment, is expressly ordered in other parts of the Scripture: Thus, "If any one of your brethren shall come to poverty, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor close thy hand, but thou shalt open it to the poor man; thou shalt lend him that which thou perceivest he hath need of," Deut. xv. 7; and a little after, "There

will not be wanting poor in the land of thy habitation; therefore I command thee to open thy hand to thy poor and needy brother that dwelleth in the land." ver. 11. Hence, "Help the poor because of the commandment, and send him not away empty handed because of his poverty," Ecclus. xxix. 12. Also, "But yet that which remaineth give in alms," Luke, xi. 41. "Sell what you possess and give alms; make to yourselves bags which grow not old; a treasure in heaven which faileth not," Luke, xii. 33. "Let every one labour, working with his hand the thing which is good, that he may have something to give him that suffereth need," Eph. iv. 28. "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; . . . to do good—to be rich in good works—to give easily—to communicate to others—to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life," 1 Tim. vi. 17. See here both the proper use of riches, according to the will of God, and the happy effects of this use of them. Lastly, our Saviour assures us that the sentence of eternal happiness or misery will be pronounced upon us at the day of judgment, according as we have performed or neglected this duty," Mat. xxv. For neglecting it the rich glutton was condemned to eternal misery, Luke, xvi. 19.

Q. 25. Have, then, the poor a right to be assisted by the rich?

A. In the sight of God they certainly have; for God, Who is the common master both of rich and poor, has given riches to the one, as to a steward in His family, with orders to supply the wants of the poor out of their abundance; "Let your abundance supply their wants," 2 Cor. viii. 14; therefore the poor, who are the creatures

of God as well as the rich, have a just title to such supply—as the lower servants in a great man's family have a title to their food and wages from the steward, whom their common master has set over them. The Scriptures call almsgiving to the poor a debt, and the refusal of it a defrauding of the poor: "Son, defraud not the poor of alms, and turn not away thy eyes from the poor. . . . Bow down thy ear cheerfully to the poor, and pay what thou owest," Ecclus. iv. 1, 8.

Q. 26. Is it, then, a great sin to refuse to assist the poor?

A. The Scriptures say, "He who has the substance of this world, and sees his brother in necessity, and shuts his bowels against him, how does the love of God remain in him?" 1 John, iii. 17. For, (1.) To neglect the poor is a sin against the providence of God, because it gives them occasion to complain against it, and affords a pretext to wicked men to deny it: "He who despises the poor reproaches his Maker," Prov. xvii. 5. (2.) It is a sin against the supreme dominion of God, because a refusal to apply His goods according to His will. (3.) It is a sin against charity in both its branches. (4.) It is a sin against justice in the sight of God.

Q. 27. Is there any encouragement from Scripture besides the command to the practice of almsgiving?

A. There is; for we are assured that it is of the utmost advantage both to our temporal and spiritual concerns.

Q. 28. How is almsgiving of advantage to our temporal concerns?

A. In several respects. (1.) As to our worldly goods and possessions, it is the most effectual means to obtain a blessing and to increase them: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and give Him the first of all thy

fruits; and thy barns shall be filled with abundance, and thy presses shall run over with wine," Prov. iii. 9. "He who gives to the poor shall not want," Prov. xviii. 27. "He that ministereth seed to the sower, will both give you bread to eat, and will multiply your seed, and increase the growth of the fruits of your justice," 2 Cor. ix. 10. Nor can we be surprised, for "he that hath mercy on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay him," Prov. xix. 17, and that with great interest; for "give to the Most High according to what He has given to thee, and with a good eye do according to the abilities of thy hands; for the Lord maketh recompense, and will give thee seven times as much," Exclus. xxxv. 12. Christ Himself declares the same truth in these words, "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over," Luke, vi. 38. And Almighty God, to convince us how much we may depend on His promises, says, "Try me in this, if I do not open to you the floodgates of heaven, and pour you out a blessing even to abundance," Mal. iii. 10. On the contrary, "He who despises the poor shall suffer want," Prov. xxviii. 27. "He that stoppeth his ear against the poor, himself shall also cry, and shall not be heard," Prov. xxi. 13. "Some distribute their goods, and grow richer; others take away what is not their own, and are always in want," Prov. xi. 24.

Consider here the examples in Scripture of the almighty power of God in supplying all necessaries to His servants: how He fed the Israelites in the wilderness; Elias, when he fled from Achab and the five thousand in the Gospel. These show how easy it is for Him to perform the promises made to almsgiving, and to repay abundantly whatever is given for His sake.

(2.) Almsgiving procures comfort and help in sickness and distress. "Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and poor, the Lord will deliver him in the evil day: the Lord will preserve him, and give him life, and make him blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies. The Lord will help him in his bed of sorrow—Thou hast turned all his couch in his sickness," Ps. xl. 1. "Place thy treasure in the commandments of the Most High, and it shall bring thee more profit than gold. Shut up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil, better than the shield of the mighty, and better than the spear; it shall fight for thee against thy enemies," Ecclus. xxix. 14. (3.) It brings a blessing upon their posterity: "These were men of mercy, whose godly deeds have not failed; good things continue with their seed—their posterity are a holy inheritance, and their children, for their sakes, remain for ever; their seed and their glory shall not be forsaken," Ecclus. xliv. 10.

Q. 29. Of what advantage is almsgiving to our spiritual concerns?

A. The Scriptures mention what follows: (1.) "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house; when thou shalt see one naked cover him, and despise not thy own flesh; then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up," Isa. lviii. 7. "He that is inclined to mercy shall be blessed, for he hath given of his bread to the poor," Prov. xxii. 9. "He that showeth mercy to the poor shall be blessed," Prov. xiv. 21. "The lips of many shall bless him that is liberal of his bread," Ecclus.

xxxi. 28. "I have shown you all things," says St Paul, "how that labouring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the word of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive," Acts, xx. 35. "Go sell what thou hast," says Christ Himself, "and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," Mat. xix. 21. And "when thou makest a feast, call the poor and the maimed, and the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just," Luke, xiv. 13. For "whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward," Mat. x. 42.

(2.) Almsgiving frees from sin, by obtaining from God the grace of true repentance and inclining Him to mercy: "Water quencheth a flaming fire, and almsgiving resisteth sins," Ecclus. iii. 33. "Stretch out thy hand to the poor, that thy expiation and blessing may be perfected," Ecclus. vii. 36. "Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor, for so it shall come to pass, that the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee; for alms deliver from all sin," Tob. iv. 7, 11. Hence the angel said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thy alms are come up as a memorial in the sight of God," Acts, x. 4. And the advice Daniel gave to Nabuchodonosor to avert the impending judgments of God was this, "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor," Dan. iv. 24. (3.) It delivers from death, and secures eternal life; for "he that followeth justice and mercy shall find life, justice, and glory," Prov. xxi. 21.

"If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little; for thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity, for alms deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer a soul to go into darkness," Tob. iv. 9. "Almsgiving delivers from death, and purges away sin, and maketh a man find mercy and eternal life," Tob. xii. 9. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, for I was hungry, and you gave Me meat," &c., Mat. xxv. 34.

Q. 30. In what manner ought we to give alms in order to merit these blessings?

A. Our almsgiving, to be truly agreeable to God and profitable to ourselves, must be accompanied with these four conditions,—1. We must give as to God, and not as to man. This is of the greatest importance, and what properly makes our alms charity. Our treatment of the poor, Almighty God regards as His own: "He that oppresseth the poor, upbraideth his Master; but he that hath pity on the poor, honoureth Him," Prov. xiv. 31. "He that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay him," Prov. xix. 17. "Whatsoever you did to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me," Mat. xxv. 40. In consequence of this, we have seen above how amply He will repay, both in our temporal and spiritual concerns, all the good done to Him in the persons of the poor. On the contrary, He will severely punish those who neglect the poor; for He has declared that He is "the refuge, the strength, the protector, and the avenger of the poor;" and assures us that "he that stoppeth his ear against the cry of the poor, shall also cry himself, and shall not be heard," Prov. xxi. 13. Witness the rich glutton in hell crying for a drop of water. And "he that giveth

to the poor shall not want; but he that despiseth his entreaty shall suffer indigence," Prov. xxviii. 27. "Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy," James, ii. 13; and that He will pass the sentence of reprobation on them at the last day who have neglected to assist Him in His poor brethren, Mat. xxv. 41. From this it is manifest, that as Jesus Christ expressly considers all we do to the poor as done to Himself, we ought therefore, in giving alms, to look on our poor brother as one sent by Jesus Christ Himself asking assistance from us. Had we a lively sense of this truth, what noble effects would it not produce? Would we ever dare to reproach, upbraid, oppress, or insult our poor brother? "If thou didst know the gift of God," said Jesus Christ to the Samaritan woman, "and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink," John, iv. 10. So if we did but reflect Who it is that asketh of us in the person of the poor, instead of being backward to give, or thinking we did the poor a favour, we should be happy to have the opportunity of giving, and look upon it as a favour.

2. We must give with a pure intention for God's sake. This also is of great importance, and absolutely necessary to make our alms an act of charity. Some give alms from natural compassion. This is, indeed, an amiable disposition, but it is not charity; a heathen, Mahometan, or Jew would do the same. Some give to be seen by men, and to obtain praise from them. This is vanity and pride, and very far from being charity; and our Saviour assures us that such as these need expect no reward from God, Mat. vi. 2. Some give in order to be freed from the poor man's importunity; but this is being no better than the unjust judge in the Gospel, who neither feared God nor regarded man, but

did justice to the widow, "because she was troublesome to him," Luke, xviii. 5. Some give alms from human respect, because the person who asks for the poor is one whom they stand in awe of; but neither is this charity. Now, unless our alms be really acts of charity, they will be of no avail before God. "Though I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor," says St Paul, "and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 3. In order that our alms be charity, they must be given purely for the love of God, to relieve Jesus Christ in His poor members, and for His sake.

Christ Himself gives us three excellent rules for our conduct on this matter,—(1.) To avoid all ostentation, and never to do or say anything with the view of letting others know what alms we give: "When thou dost an almsdeed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen, I say to you, that they have received their reward," Mat. vi. 2. (2.) To endeavour, as far as we can, to keep secret and hidden from men the alms we give. "But thou," he adds, "when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth," verse 3. (3.) To desire it to be known only to God, to offer it up purely for His honour and glory, and to look for our reward only from Him—"That thy alms," says He, "may be in secret; and thy Father, Who sees in secret, will repay thee," verse 4.

3. We must give abundantly—that is, according to the wants of the poor and our own abilities. (1.) This is the express command: "Thou shalt open thy hand to the poor man, and thou shalt lend him that which thou perceivest he has need of," Deut. 15. 8. And therefore, "In this present time," says St Paul, "let your abundance supply their wants," 2 Cor. viii. 14. "According

to thy ability stretch out thy hand, and give to the poor," Ecclus. xiv. 3. "Give to the Most High according to what He hath given to thee; and with a good eye do according to the ability of thy hands, for the Lord maketh recompense," Ecclus. xxxv. 12. "According to thy ability be merciful: if thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little; for thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity," Tob. iv. 8.

(2.) The measure of our alms to the poor is the measure of the mercy of God to us; for "with the same measure that thou shalt mete withal, it shall be measured to you again," Luke, vi. 38. We are all poor in the sight of God, and stand in the utmost need of mercy. Now, when we ask mercy from God, in what manner do we ask it? The royal prophet teaches us: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out all my iniquties," Ps. i. 1. And indeed it is not a small mercy that will suffice, considering our manifold necessities of soul and body, for time and for eternity. If, therefore, we give but sparingly to the poor; if we be hard-hearted and close-handed to them; if we show but small mercy to Jesus Christ in the persons of His brethren,—how can we ask a great mercy from Him when He has expressly declared that He will measure to us as we mete to him in the persons of His poor members? "Let not thy hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldest give," Ecclus. iv. 36.

(3.) To give abundantly is to imitate God Himself, "Who giveth to all abundantly and upbraideth not," James, i. 5. Hence, "The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them meat in due season;

thou openest Thy hand, and fillest with Thy blessing every living creature," Ps. cxliv. 15. "Let the mercies of the Lord give glory to Him, and His wonderful works to the children of men, for He hath satisfied the empty soul, and filled the hungry soul with good things," Ps. cvi. 8. Let every one consider how liberal Almighty God has been to him in providing all necessaries since he came into the world, and learn from that what the measure of his own liberality towards others ought to be. It is by doing so that we become children of God; and our Saviour commands us to imitate Him in this: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful," Luke, vi. 36.

4. But to make even our abundant alms thoroughly agreeable to God, "we must give them cheerfully"—that is, with a willing heart and a pleasant countenance. This is greatly recommended to us in the Word of God. Thus, "In every gift show a cheerful countenance, . . . and with a good eye do according to the ability of thy hands, for the Lord maketh recompense," Ecclus. xxxv. 11. "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity, . . . he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness," Rom. xii. 8. The reason is, Jesus Christ, Who receives our alms by the hands of the poor, regards more the disposition of the heart than the thing we give; and therefore St Paul, exhorting to this duty of almsgiving, says, "He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who soweth in blessings shall also reap of blessings. Every one as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver," 2 Cor. ix. 7. Now there are some very strong incitements to give both abundantly and cheerfully, if we consider who it is that asks—Jesus Christ. What doth He ask? His own goods. He asks alms as a favour to supply His necessi-

ties; as a loan which He engages to repay, and with great interest. What things do we need from Him? Mercy, grace, salvation—all goods for soul and body, for time and eternity. How may we best obtain these things? By giving liberal alms with cheerfulness. What do we give? A morsel of bread, a trifle of money. What do we receive? Pardon of our sins and eternal life. What a profitable bargain! How happy ought we to be to make it!

From this condition of giving alms cheerfully, it naturally follows that we ought to show great kindness to the poor, sympathising and speaking kindly, even when we are unable to relieve them, and by no means using harshness, remembering that what we do to them Jesus Christ considers as done to Himself. On this head the Scripture is very strong: "Despise not the hungry, and provoke not the poor in his want. Afflict not the heart of the needy, and defer not to give to him that is in distress; . . . turn not away thy eyes from the poor for fear of anger; and give not to them that ask of thee room to curse thee behind thy back. For the prayer of him that curseth thee in the bitterness of his soul shall be heard; for He that made him shall hear him. Make thyself affable to the congregation of the poor; . . . bow down thy ear cheerfully to the poor, and pay what thou owest, and answer him peaceable words with mildness," Ecclus. iv. 2. "My son, in thy good deeds make no complaint; and when thou givest anything, add not grief by an evil word. Shall not the dew assuage the heat? So also the good word is better than the gift; . . . a fool will upbraid bitterly; and a gift of one ill-taught consumeth the eyes," Ecclus. xviii. 15. "There is a gift that is not profitable; and there is a gift, the recompense of which is double; . . . the gift of a fool shall do thee no good, for his eyes are

sevenfold. He will give a few things, and upbraid much; and the opening of his mouth is kindling of a fire," Ecclus. xx. 10.

Q. 31. But what if a person has little, and is not able to give abundantly?

A. Almsgiving is not measured by Almighty God by the quantity alone, but by the goodwill of the giver; and if one who has little gives part of that little willingly, he will be as acceptable as another who gives much more of his abundance — nay, a single penny from one may be more abundant alms before God than a pound from another. Thus, "Jesus sitting over against the treasury, and many that were rich cast in much; and there came a certain poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing. And calling His disciples together, He said to them, Amen, I say to you, this poor woman hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living," Mark, xii. 41. Now who is there so poor that he cannot spare a little to help those who have less than himself?

But let those who make this objection of having little to spare examine from what this arises, and perhaps they will find that by proper management they might have abundance. To understand this, let us consider the following rules laid down in Scripture: (1.) "That which remaineth," says our blessed Saviour, "give in alms," Luke, xi. 41—that is, that which remaineth over and above your own real necessaries. The primitive Christians were so observant of this rule that they frequently fasted in order to have wherewith to relieve those in want; and the holy fathers give this as one reason for fasting, that we may have the more to spare

for the poor. This deserves to be seriously reflected on by those who indulge themselves in unnecessary delicacies, who frequent idle company, spend their money in drinking, gaming, plays, and expensive amusements, and then say they have nothing to spare to assist Jesus Christ in His poor members. Let them consider what excuse they will be able to allege before the tribunal of Jesus Christ when accused of having spent so much of His goods in the service of their passions and of Satan, that they had nothing to spare for Him. (2.) "Let him labour," says St Paul, "working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need," Eph. iv. 28. This is applicable chiefly to those who labour for their bread, as servants and single persons who have none to provide for but themselves, and it points out the use they ought to make of what they earn. Let them examine how they spend their gains; and if they squander them, let them consider how this will stand before God.

Q. 32. But if one has a family, must he not lay up some provision for them, and even think of old age?

A. All these are excellent reasons when used to prevent one from spending money in gaming, drinking, high living, fine clothes, and the like; because then they are reasons of worldly but laudable prudence, opposed to the follies of self-love. But when they are used to hinder us from giving alms, while they are not used to stop these follies, they are mere delusions, diabolical reasons, and such as will never stand the test of the sanctuary, because employed against the command of God, and involving a grievous insult to His Divine Providence, and a distrust of His sacred promise to bless the temporal affairs and the families of those who are liberal to the poor. Many have ruined themselves and

their families by not using these reasons against the follies of their self-love, but where shall we find one example of ruin brought on by almsgiving?

Section IV.

Of Brotherly Correction.

Q. 33. What is brotherly correction?

A. It is a spiritual almsgiving to the soul of our neighbour, or a charitable admonition given to our Christian brother for his spiritual good, when we see him either doing anything injurious to his soul, or in danger of being led to do so.

Q. 34. Are all obliged to perform this duty of brotherly correction?

A. Every one is bound by charity and the command of God to perform it in proper circumstances; but those who have authority over others, as masters, parents, and pastors of souls, are specially bound to do so. They are also obliged to perform it as a duty annexed to their office, which binds them to take particular care of the souls of those under their charge, and not to allow them to offend God.

Q. 35. What are the grounds of this duty for all in general?

A. (1.) That charity or love of our neighbour which Jesus Christ requires of His followers; for, as we have seen above, this love must be founded on the love of God—that is, we must love our neighbour because he belongs to, and is nearly connected with God, and we must show our love to him chiefly by endeavouring to bring him to God. And, indeed, if our natural affection for a friend makes us have a regard for everything that

belongs to him, and if it be in danger makes us use every means to save it, how much more ought our love for God excite us to save our neighbour's soul, and bring it to God, when in danger of being lost by sin? (2.) The duty of corporal almsgiving which we owe to our neighbour; for if we be so strictly obliged in charity to assist him in his corporeal necessities, how much more in what regards his soul and his eternal salvation? (3.) The command of loving our neighbour as Christ loved us; for the love of Christ was chiefly directed to the salvation of our souls. All He did, said, and suffered was directed to this end. Such, therefore, ought our love for our neighbour to be: and as Christ loved us to that degree as to lay down His life for souls, so, say the Holy Scriptures, "we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren," 1 John, iii. 16—namely, when the good of their souls requires it. If, therefore, we ought to lay down our life for our neighbour's soul, how much more ought we to give him an admonition in charity, and a brotherly correction, when we see him in danger of injuring his soul? (4.) Our love of God enjoins the same duty; for how can we pretend to love God if we see our brother's soul, which is so dear to Him, in danger of perishing, and will not speak a word to preserve it? The Scripture says, "If any man hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?" 1 John, iii. 17. How much more may it be said, if any one sees his brother's soul in need of spiritual admonition, and shall shut up his bowels from him, and refuse to give it him, "how does the charity of God abide in him?"

(5.) The Scriptures assure us that "God gave to every

one a command concerning his neighbour," Ecclus. xvii. 12. What this command is we learn from St Paul when he says, "We being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another," Rom. xii. 5. Now, "God hath so tempered the body together, . . . that there might be no schism in the body; but the members might be careful one for another, and if one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it," 1 Cor. xii. 24, 26. The command, therefore, given to us is, to love one another as members of the same body, "to be careful one for another," and consequently to give all help and assistance to our brother in his wants, especially in those of his soul. (6.) Our blessed Saviour Himself expressly commands it: "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and reprove him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother," Mat. xviii. 15. In which words this duty is clearly commanded, and at the same time the motive for it plainly pointed out; for our Saviour, by saying "if he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother," teaches us that our only end in rebuking him should be his amendment, and the gaining of his soul, which was in danger of being lost.

(7.) The same command is several times repeated in Scripture, with reasons to enforce its observance: thus, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but reprove him openly, lest thou incur sin through him," Lev. xix. 17; where we see that our neglect of this duty, when our admonition might have been of service to our brother, renders us partakers of his sin. So also the wise man says, "Deliver them that are led to death, and those that are drawn to death forbear not to deliver. If thou say, I have not strength enough, He that seeth into the heart, He understandeth, and nothing deceiveth the keeper of thy soul, and He

shall render to a man according to his works," Prov. xxiv. 11—that is, when you see your neighbour in danger of the death of the soul, forbear not to deliver him; and though you think your admonition will not succeed, no matter—do your best; and God, who sees the heart, will reward you. And a little after he adds, "They that say to the wicked man, Thou art just, shall be cursed by the people, and the tribes shall abhor him; they that rebuke him shall be praised, and a blessing shall come upon them," ver. 24, 25. Again, "Reprove a friend, lest he may not have understood, and say, I did not; or if he did it, that he may do it no more," Ecclus. xix. 13—that is, if you hear any bad report against your brother, admonish him of it, that if innocent he may defend himself, and if guilty he may amend. Also, "Admonish thy neighbour before thou threaten him, and give place to the fear of the Most High," Ecclus. xix. 17—that is, if your neighbour do you an injury, suppress your anger, do not give way to passion, but correct him in private with mildness, for fear of offending God. Lastly, "Reverence not thy neighbour in his fall, and refrain not to speak in the time of salvation," Ecclus. iv. 27—that is, be not ashamed to correct thy neighbour when he commits a fault, nor to admonish him in what concerns his salvation; perhaps that is the time on which his salvation may depend. (8.) A great reward is annexed to it; for "if any of you err from the truth, and one convert him, he must know that he who causeth a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins," James, v. 19, 20.

Q. 36. Why are the pastors of souls more particularly obliged to admonish and correct those under their charge?

A. Because it is particularly incumbent on those who have the charge of others, especially pastors of souls, to admonish those under them, and to correct their faults. This is a special duty annexed to their office, and strictly enjoined by Almighty God.

Q. 37. What are these reasons with regard to pastors of souls?

A. Chiefly these: (1.) They are, by their office, intrusted with the care of promoting the glory of God among men, for "they are taken from among men, and appointed for men in the things that appertain to God," Heb. v. 1. They are the ministers of God, the ambassadors of God, and the dispensers of His mysteries, consequently they are obliged to seek and defend His glory and honour as the very end of their vocation. Jesus Christ, Who is the chief pastor, declares of Himself, "that He sought not His own glory, but the glory of His Father, Who sent Him," John, vii. 18, viii. 50, and says, "that if He sought His own glory, His glory was nothing," ver. 54. And the night before His passion, He addressed Himself to His Father in these words: "I have glorified Thee upon earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," John, xvii. 4. Now as this was the work committed to Christ by His Father, "to glorify Him upon earth," so it is also by Christ committed to all those who are pastors of souls under Him, to whom He says, "as My Father sent Me, I also send you." Almighty God so strictly requires this duty from them, that He speaks thus to those who neglect it: "And now, O ye priests, to you is this commandment—if you will not hear, if you will not lay it to heart, to give glory to My name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will send poverty upon you, and will curse your blessings; yea, I will curse them, because you have not laid it to heart," Mal. ii. 1. Those

who have the charge of souls are strictly obliged to promote the glory of God among their flock; and they are no less obliged to prevent His being dishonoured, by admonishing and correcting their people when they act contrary to His holy will. (2.) They are also, by their office, intrusted with the care of souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, and having undertaken the charge of bringing them to God; they are obliged to use every endeavour to remove whatever tends to their ruin and destruction, and therefore to admonish and correct them for their faults. (3.) The commission which God gave to His priest and prophet Jeremiah, and in him (as their model) to all who have the charge of souls, shows with what courage they ought to perform this duty: "Lo, I have set thee this day over nations and kingdoms, to root up and to pull down, and to waste, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant. . . . Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and rise and speak to them all that I command thee. Be not afraid at their presence, for I will make thee not to fear their countenance," Jer. i. 10, 17.

(4.) The injunction given to Ezechiel is particularly clear, and shows the greatness of this duty, both in admonishing the wicked when they do amiss, and the good when they are in danger of offending God. "Son of man," says Almighty God, "I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel. . . . If, when I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, thou declare it not to him, nor speak to him, that he may be converted from his wicked way and live; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at thy hand. But if thou give warning to the wicked, and he be not converted from his wickedness, and from his evil way, he, indeed, shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul. Moreover, if the just man shall turn away from his

justice, and shall commit iniquity, I will lay a stumbling-block before him; he shall die, because thou hast not given him warning; he shall die in his sin, and his justices which he hath done shall not be remembered; but I will require his blood at thy hand. But if thou warn the just man, that the just man may not sin, and he doth not sin, living he shall live, because thou hast warned him, and thou hast delivered thy soul," Ezech. iii. 17, &c. This needs no explanation; it shows how much the death or salvation of souls may depend upon the omitting or giving a seasonable and charitable admonition: "He shall die," says God, "because thou hast not given him warning;" and again, "living he shall live, because thou hast warned him." The same thing is repeated, Ezech. xxxiii.

(5.) Almighty God, speaking to His prophet Isaiah on the duty of warning sinners, expresses Himself thus: "Cry—cease not—lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their wicked doings, and the house of Jacob their sins," Isa. lviii. 1. And it is given as one of the causes of the ruin of Jerusalem, that their prophets did not lay open their iniquity to the people: "Thy prophets have seen false and foolish things for thee; and they have not laid open thy iniquity to excite thee to penance," Lam. ii. 14. (6.) All these commands and admonitions to the pastors of souls from the Old Testament are confirmed and greatly enforced by what St Paul enjoins to His disciple Timothy under the Gospel: "I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the living and the dead, by His coming and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke with all patience and doctrine." And that none who have the charge of souls might be deterred from this

duty, for fear of giving offence, He forewarns His disciples that this will sometimes be the case: "There shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine. . . . And will turn away their hearing from the truth, and will be turned to fables." Yet this notwithstanding, He immediately adds, "But be thou vigilant —labour in all things—do the work of an evangelist —fulfil thy ministry," 2 Tim. iv. 1. Do your duty; let them take it as they please; save your own soul; for if you neglect your part, "their blood will be required at your hand," Ezech. iii. In like manner, after giving several advices to Titus, He concludes, "These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority," Tit. ii. 15. (7.) To these strong and clear testimonies of Holy Writ add this reason, that if pastors of souls are known to overlook what is sinful in their people, this proves an encouragement to the delinquent, and also to others to follow the bad example given. Thus the evil spreads, when those who ought to prevent it neglect in time to apply the remedy.

Q. 38. Why are men generally so negligent in performing this duty?

A. The behaviour of some persons in regard to this act of charity is most unchristian. They say, I have no charge of him; I have enough to do with myself; it is his business—let him look to it; and the like. These behave like Cain, who, when God asked him, "Where is your brother Abel?" answered, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" But ought they not to fear lest the same sentence be passed on them as was passed on Cain? Such behaviour shows that they have neither the love of God nor the love of their neighbour; neither zeal for God's glory nor concern for their neighbour's salvation; nor indeed can they have any serious

concern for their own, when they speak so lightly of a duty which the law of God so strictly enjoins. Others, again, do not show open disregard of this duty; they are even sensible of their obligation, but are withheld from performing it by various causes. (1.) The fear of displeasing their friend, and at the same time of not effecting any good by their admonitions. But they ought to consider that this fear is not an excuse, and that it is often groundless; for a person may do wrong through inadvertence, and when admonished, be grateful to his friend, and amend. Sometimes he is not aware that his fault is known to others, and when he sees it is, he is incited to correct it; and even though displeased at the moment, he may afterwards think on the admonition, and profit by it. They ought also to reflect on the danger of their friend's soul if not corrected, and consider whether that or the risk of losing his friendship ought to preponderate; and whether they ought to be influenced by mere human respect or the command of God. (2.) A consciousness of their being equally guilty themselves of the same fault. But if their own guilt be unknown, though humbled by it, they ought to perform their duty to their brother, endeavouring at the same time to correct themselves. If their own guilt be known, they ought to speak to their neighbour with courage, putting themselves into the same scale, and making their correction fall on themselves as well as on him. This will make their neighbour take it in better part, will hurt his pride less, and will encourage him under the reproof. (3.) A certainty that it will do harm, and make their neighbour become worse. When this is really the case, it excuses from this duty those who are not obliged to it by their office, and have not authority to punish obstinate offenders; because our Saviour says, "Give not that which is

holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet, and turning upon you, tear you," Mat. vii. 6. And the wise man says, "He that teacheth a scorner, doth an injury to himself; and he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himself a blot. Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee," Prov. ix. 7, 8.

Q. 39. But does not experience show that brotherly correction seldom does good, and often harm?

A. This is too often seen; but the reason is, because it is often given in an improper manner, which destroys the good effect, and causes it to be taken amiss. Men reprove and rebuke their neighbour from pride, showing contempt, and exposing him to the contempt of others; or from a discontented peevish disposition, which takes pleasure in carping and finding fault with everything,—but this, however common in the world, does not deserve the name of fraternal correction.

Q. 40. In what manner, then, ought it to be given?

A. To do this properly, the following rules are to be observed: (1.) There ought to be a real fault committed or a real danger incurred; nothing is more offensive than to be finding fault upon every trifling occasion. Admonition from people who act so can have little or no effect even when a real cause occurs; all they say will be attributed more to their fretful humour and peevishness than to reason and charity. (2.) It must proceed from real charity—that is, from a true love for the person, and a desire for the good of his soul; for, as our Saviour says, "If he shall hear you, you shall gain your brother:" by this He clearly shows that the motive for correcting ought only to be with a view to gain him, who might be lost if not admonished. But if the reproof arise from anger or displeasure, instead of brotherly correc-

tion, it becomes a sinful burst of passion, and can never do good. The person corrected will easily perceive from what the correction proceeds: if he be convinced it arises from love, he cannot fail to take it well; but if otherwise, it will only provoke and irritate him. (3.) It must be done with meekness and humility, which will always be the case when it proceeds from real charity. "Brethren," says St Paul, "if a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual instruct such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," Gal. vi. 1. (4.) It must be done in season, when the person is disposed to receive it; not when he is in passion, engaged in dispute, or when it exposes him to humiliation before others, because then there is little hope of success. (5.) Whoever would correct others profitably must never presume on himself, but confide in God alone, and earnestly recommend the whole affair to Him Who alone can touch the heart, and give a blessing to our words: "Consider the works of God, that no man can correct whom he despiseth," Eccles. vii. 14.

Q. 41. Are there any other particular rules for those who have the charge of others in exercising this duty of correction?

A. Their correction ought never to proceed from any other motive than charity, zeal for the glory of God, and the good of the soul of the person corrected, and from a sense of duty; hence all anger and passion ought to be banished far from them when exercising this duty. But it will often be necessary both to correct in public and punish where there is little hope of amendment—for the sake of discipline, for preventing the fall of others, and lest silence should be interpreted as approbation.

Section V.

Scandal.

Q. 42. What is scandal?

A. Scandal is the murder of the soul. Now as the soul can be murdered only by sin, by scandal is understood any word, action, or omission which is either evil in itself or has the appearance of evil, and on that account is the occasion of our neighbour's falling into sin.

Q. 43. How many kinds of scandal are there?

A. Three kinds: (1.) Malicious scandal; (2.) Scandal of weak brethren; and, (3.) Pharisaical scandal.

Q. 44. What is malicious scandal?

A. It is when one either directly or indirectly, by words or actions, causes others to sin—that is, when he does or says anything evil either with the design of causing others to sin, which is giving scandal directly, or when he knows, or ought to know, what he says or does will be an occasion of sin to others, though he does not design or intend it—and this is giving scandal indirectly.

Q. 45. Who are guilty of this malicious scandal?

A. (1.) Those who give bad example to persons under them; parents who commit any sin before their children, masters who act similarly with their servants, and servants who speak or act improperly in presence of the children of the family. (2.) Those who, by alluring words, indecent dress, or carriage, entice others to sin, teach them evil they knew not before, or engage them in dangerous amusements and conversation, which is the great means by which impurity, drunkenness, and gaming are promoted. (3.) Those who ridicule and laugh at others on account of their piety and virtue. This is a

lamentable evil, and one of the chief instruments the devil makes use of to advance the reign of impiety and wickedness. (4.) Those who counsel others to what is bad and contrary to duty. (5.) Those who provoke others to anger and cursing by insulting language, or to impurity by immodest discourse, songs, books, or actions. (6.) Those who encourage others in evil by praise and flattery: thus, some encourage children and servants to steal from their parents and masters, and then praise them as good-natured, kind-hearted, and charitable. (7.) Those who allow young people of different sexes to meet at their houses at untimely hours for drinking, dancing, or gaming, which is often a source of innumerable crimes.

Q. 46. How great is the evil of this kind of scandal?

A. This will best appear from these considerations: (1.) It is a murder of their neighbour's soul, which is so much the more grievous in the sight of God, as the soul is more precious than the body, and as the death of the soul is more dreadful than that of the body. Now if the murder of the body cries to heaven for vengeance, what must the murder of the soul do? (2.) In those who do it intentionally, it is a most grievous sin, because it generally arises from malignant envy. Thus, the Holy Scripture puts these words into the mouth of these unhappy sinners: "Let us lie in wait for the just, because he is not for our turn, and he is contrary to our doings, and upbraideth us with transgressions of the law, and divulgeth against us the sins of our way of life. . . . He is become a censurer of our thoughts; he is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other men's, and his ways are very different," Wis. ii. 12, &c. See here the language of their heart, the secret springs of their conduct: "His

ways are contrary to our doings; he upbraideth us; he is grievous unto us even to behold." The piety of the just man condemns their negligence; his virtue their vices; his devotion their irreligion: this galls them to the heart; this excites their envy, and makes them fall upon every hellish device to render the just man as bad as themselves.

(3.) It is a diabolical vice, and shows those who are guilty of it to be instruments and agents of the devil; for "by the envy of the devil, death came into the world, and they follow him who are of his side," Wis. ii. 24, which is the conclusion the Scriptures draw in that chapter, wherein the springs of their conduct are related as above. Nay, Christ Himself declares them to be children of the devil: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do; he was a murderer from the beginning," John, viii. 44. And of what was he a murderer but of souls? (4.) It is the highest injury done to Jesus Christ, because it robs Him of those souls for which He shed His precious blood; it defeats, as far as possible, the end for which Christ came into the world; it is an open espousing of the interests of Satan in opposition to God. (5.) The most dreadful woes are pronounced by Christ Himself against those who are guilty of it: "Woe to the world on account of scandals, for it must needs be that scandals come; but nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh," Mat. xviii. 7. "He that shall scandalise one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Mat. xviii. 6. Hear again how pathetically he addresses them in the persons of the Pharisees: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the kingdom of

heaven against men; for you go not in yourselves, and those that are going in you suffer not to enter," Mat. xxiii. 13. It is true, the effects of this woe do not always come upon them visibly in this world; but see what will be their fate at the great day: "The Son of man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of this kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xiii. 41.

Q. 47. How must innocent people behave to prevent their being corrupted by those who give scandal?

A. (1.) They ought above all things to fly from them, and avoid their company. The old inhabitants of Canaan were a most wicked people: when God brought His people out of Egypt to place them in Canaan, to preserve them from danger, and at the same time to punish the crimes of the Canaanites, He ordered His people to destroy them entirely, lest they should be a scandal to them: "Thou shalt not enter into a league with them; . . . let them not dwell in thy land, lest perhaps they make thee sin against Me, if thou serve their gods, which undoubtedly will be a scandal to thee," Exod. xxiii. 33. And in fact, their not observing this order proved their ruin; for "they did not destroy the nations of which the Lord spoke to them; and they were mingled among the heathens, and learned their works, and served their idols, and it became a stumbling-block to them," Ps. cv. 34. Behold the fatal consequences of bad company, and the necessity of flying from it; for "evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33. On this account the wise man says, "Be not a friend to an angry man, and do not walk with a furious man, lest perhaps thou learn his ways, and take a scandal to thy soul," Prov. xxii. 24. St Paul also gives the same orders: "Mark

those that cause dissensions and offences" (that is, scandals) "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17. And Christ Himself ordains the same: "If your right hand or right eye scandalise you"—that is, if the person who scandalises us be as dear or useful as your right hand or right eye, no matter —"cut off the hand," and "pluck out the eye, and cast it from you;" and He immediately adds the reason: "For it is better with one eye or one hand to enter into heaven, than having both to be cast into hell-fire," Mat. xviii. Happy would it be for many modest young women if they observed this rule, and fled the company of those who offer the least indecency or speak an immodest word in their presence, looking upon them as agents of hell, angels of Satan, and a scandal to their souls. (2.) They ought also to have a great love for the law of God, procure instruction in it, and meditate upon it frequently. One great cause of the ruin of souls is ignorance of their duty. When they fall into bad company, they are easily persuaded to sin, and to believe, from what they see and hear, that the evil is not so great as they thought. The only remedy here is to know well what the law of God requires; for "much peace have they that love thy law, and there is no stumbling-block to them," Ps. cxviii. 165. (3.) Fervent and frequent prayer to God is also most necessary for the preservation of their innocence; for as none but God can enable us to avoid and escape the numberless snares laid for our souls, so it is chiefly by prayer that we can obtain His protection against them. The royal prophet was very sensible of this, and therefore prayed thus: "The proud have hid a net for me, they have stretched out cords for a snare, they have laid for me a stumbling-block by the wayside.

I said to the Lord, Thou art my God; . . . give me not up, O Lord, from my desire to the wicked; they have plotted against me, do not thou forsake me, lest they should triumph," Ps. cxxxix. 6.

Q. 48. What is the scandal of weak brethren?

A. This happens when one has no design of drawing others into sin, and does nothing in itself sinful, but does what has the appearance of evil, which weak brethren—that is, ignorant and ill-instructed—seeing, are scandalised, and take occasion to sin. Thus, if a person, for just reasons, has permission to eat flesh-meat in Lent, an ignorant person seeing it, and not knowing the cause, says, If this person eats flesh-meat, why may not I? and upon this follows the example he sees, without cause or permission, and so sins.

Q. 49. Is it a sin to give scandal of this kind?

A. When one foresees that weak persons will probably be scandalised at his doing anything which has the appearance of evil, though really lawful in itself, and be induced by seeing it to commit sin and injure their soul, in this case both the love of God and the love of his neighbour oblige him either to abstain from doing what would have such bad effects, or to take such precautions, where it can be done, as will prevent them. And indeed we are commanded to "refrain from all appearance of evil," 1 Thes. v. 22, and to "provide good things not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men," Rom. xii. 17. St Paul is particularly clear on this point. "Judge this rather," says he, "that you put not a stumbling-block or a scandal in your brother's way, . . . for if because of thy meat thy brother be grieved, thou walkest not now according to charity. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died, . . . keep the things that are of edification one towards another.

Destroy not the work of God for meat. All things indeed are clean, but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good not to eat flesh, and not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended, or scandalised, or made weak," Rom. xiv. 13. Again, writing to the Corinthians, he says, "Take heed lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumbling-block to the weak. For if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not his conscience, being weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. Now, when you sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat" (that is, if my eating flesh) "scandalise my brother, I will never eat flesh, lest I should scandalise my brother," 1 Cor. viii. 9. And that this was his constant practice on all occasions appears from what follows: "Give no offence to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; as I also in all things please all men, not seeking that which is profitable to myself, but to many, that they may be saved," 1 Cor. x. 32. In like manner, our Saviour Himself, when the tax-gatherers came to demand the tax from Him, though He was not obliged to pay, yet wrought a miracle to provide wherewith to pay it, and gave this reason, "That we may not scandalise them," Mat. xvii. 26. How different is this example of Christ and St Paul from that of many Christians, who, seeing their weak brother scandalised at what they do, cry out, "What do I care? I am doing no evil; let him look to it."

Q. 50. What is Pharisaical scandal?

A. It is when a person, from the malicious and evil disposition of his own heart, is scandalised even at the

good he sees in others, putting the worst construction upon it, and in his own mind turning the virtues of his neighbour into vices. It is called Pharisaical, because the Pharisees took this malicious scandal at Christ Himself, and all those follow their example who envy others whom they see more devout and pious than themselves.

Q. 51. How must we behave with such people?

A. We must persevere in doing good, and never be hindered from our duty on that account, as Christ teaches us by His own example; for when His disciples told Him the Pharisees were scandalised at some truth He had said, He answered thus, "Let them alone, they are blind, and leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit," Mat. xv. 14.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. 1. WHAT is the sixth commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," Exod. xx. 14.

Q. 2. What is the ninth commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," Exod. xx. 17. Now it is proper to treat of these two together, because they both relate to the same object and have the same end.

Q. 3. What is the principal design or end of the sixth and ninth commandments?

A. To direct us in our duty with regard to sensual pleasures.

Q. 4. What are the vices chiefly forbidden by these commands?

A. Lust and intemperance, whether in eating or drinking.

Q. 5. What are the virtues chiefly enjoined by them?

A. Chastity and temperance.

Section I.

Chastity.

Q. 6. Is the virtue of chastity or purity agreeable to God?

A. It is one of the virtues most agreeable to God, as appears from several considerations; for (1.) God calls us particularly to the practice of this virtue, as being that in which our sanctification in a special manner consists. "This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God, . . . for God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness; therefore he that despiseth these things, despiseth not man, but God," 1 Thes. iv. 3. (2.) Jesus Christ, while on earth, showed a particular love for this virtue, and for those who practised it. He would have none but the purest of virgins for His mother. He ever showed a particular love to His virgin disciple St John, who, on that account, was called the Beloved disciple, and at His death He recommended His virgin mother to none but His virgin disciple. (3.) It makes a person like to the angels themselves, for, as our Saviour says, "At the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but be like the angels of God in heaven," Mat. xxii. 30. Nay, as St Chrysostom observes, it makes a person even superior to the angels, by the victories gained over the temptations of impurity, of which the angels have no experience. Hence the Scripture says, "A holy and shamefaced

woman is grace upon grace," and "no price is worthy of a continent soul," Ecclus. xxvi. 19.

(4.) They who practise this virtue have three peculiar rewards bestowed upon them in heaven above all other saints. The names of the Father and of the Lamb are written on their foreheads; they follow and attend the Lamb whithersoever He goes, and sing a new canticle of praise which no other can sing. "And I beheld," says St John, "and lo a Lamb stood upon Mount Sion, and with Him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads; . . . and they sung as it were a new canticle before the throne, . . . and no man could say the canticle but those hundred and forty-four thousand, who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women; for they are virgins: these follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; these were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb," Rev. xiv. (5.) It is frequently recommended to us in the writings of the Apostles: thus, "In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, . . . in chastity," 2 Cor. vi. 4, 6. "The fruit of the Spirit is charity, . . . modesty, continency, chastity," Gal. v. 22. "Be thou an example to the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity," 1 Tim. iv. 12. And the state of celibacy in which this virtue is practised in the greatest perfection is preferred to that of matrimony, because it frees us from many cares which attend the married state, and leaves the mind at liberty to attend to the service of God. "He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please

his wife, and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married, thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your profit, that you may have power to attend upon the Lord without impediment," 1 Cor. vii. 32. Upon these grounds he concludes thus: "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well, but he that giveth her not doth better," verse 38.

Section II.

Of Luxury or Lust.

Q. 7. What is lust?

A. By lust is meant an inordinate desire of carnal pleasure, and it comprehends every unlawful violation of the virtue of chastity, whether in thought, word, or deed—all kinds of impurity or uncleanness.

Q. 8. Is lust a grievous sin?

A. It is of its own nature a grievous mortal sin, in all its different kinds and degrees, as appears from the Word of God, the punishments inflicted on it, and its fatal effects.

Q. 9. In what consists the malice of this vice?

A. (1.) It is a grievous injury to God, because it pollutes His temple: "Know you not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him God shall destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which ye are," 1 Cor. iii. 16. (2.) It is an injury to Jesus Christ, because it pollutes His members: "Know

ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid. . . . Or know you not that he who is joined to a harlot is made one body? . . . But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Fly fornication," 1 Cor. vi. 15. (3.) It is an injury done to our own body: "Fly fornication," says the apostle; "every sin that a man doth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." And he immediately shows wherein this sin against our body consists: "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you, Whom you have from God? And you are not your own, for you are bought with a great price," 1 Cor. vi. 18, 19. As therefore our bodies are not our own, but belong to God, Who has bought them with a great price, and intends them for His dwelling-place, it is a grievous injury done them to pervert them from so noble a use by defiling them with impurity. So also our Saviour says, "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, and these are the things which defile a man," Mat. xv. 19. (4.) It is an injury to the Christian religion which we profess. Hence, "But fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be so much as named among you, as becometh saints," Eph. v. 3. (5.) It is of its own nature more grievous than many other sins; for "the fault is not so great when a man hath stolen; for he stealeth to fill his hungry soul, and if he be taken he shall restore sevenfold, and shall give up all the substance of his house; but he that is an adulterer for the folly of his heart, shall destroy his own soul: he gathereth to himself shame and dishonour, and his reproach shall not be blotted out," Prov. vi. 30.

Q. 10. How does the malice of the sin of impurity

appear from the punishment inflicted upon those who were guilty of it?

A. From this obvious consideration, that God, being a God of infinite justice, can never punish a sin more than it deserves; and being also a God of infinite mercy, He generally punishes sin less than it deserves, especially in this world, where mercy is above justice. If, therefore, we see this God of justice and mercy punishing any particular sin in a remarkable manner, this must be a convincing proof how abominable it must be in itself, and how detestable in the eyes of God. Now, we find that God has punished those who were guilty of impurity with the greatest severity even in this life, and threatens them with still more dreadful effects of His vengeance in the life to come.

Q. 11. What are the Scripture examples of punishing the sin of impurity in this life?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) When the angels fell in heaven, and our first parents in paradise, Almighty God punished them indeed, but He showed no regret for having created them; but "when the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were beautiful, and had gone in to them," and by this means the sin of impurity became universal, so that "the earth was corrupted before God, and defiled with wickedness," to express His abhorrence of these abominations, the Scriptures say that God "repented that He had made man upon the earth;" and being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart, he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; from man even to beasts, and from the creeping things even to the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them," Gen. vi. 6. What a strange expression from Almighty God! But how strongly does it show how detestable

these sins of lust must be in His eyes, especially when we see that in order to cleanse the earth from these abominations He sent the waters of the Deluge and drowned the whole world, eight persons only excepted, who were found just before Him!

(2.) When the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and other neighbouring cities had given themselves up to sins of impurity, the malice of their crime was so great that the Scripture says "it cried to heaven for vengeance," Gen. xviii. 20, xix. 13; in consequence of which Almighty God, to show His detestation of this vice, rained down fire and brimstone from heaven upon them, "and overthrew these cities, and destroyed all the country about, and all the inhabitants of these cities, and all things that spring from the earth," Gen. xix. 24, 25. And that country, which before was like the paradise of God, Gen. xiii. 10, was turned into a lake of putrid water, which remains to this day an eternal monument of the detestation which God has of the sins of uncleanness. (3.) When Onias committed a sin of lust, by which he defiled the marriage-bed, he was immediately struck dead, "because," says the Scripture, "he had done a detestable thing," Gen. xxxviii. 9, 10. (4.) When the king of Moab sent a number of beautiful women into the camp of the people of Israel to seduce them, and the people had sinned with them, Almighty God was so incensed at their crime, that by His express command no less than twenty-four thousand were put to death, in order to expiate their offence, Num. xxv. 9.

Q. 12. What punishments in the next life are threatened against those who are guilty of these crimes?

A. These, indeed, are dreadful beyond measure; for the Scriptures declares, (1.) That God Himself will be their judge: "Fornicators and adulterers God will

judge," Heb. xiii. 4. And the same Scripture assures us that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31. (2.) That they shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven: "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind. . . . shall possess the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9; "for know ye this, and understand that no fornicator, or unclean, nor covetous person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 5. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, . . . of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 19, 21. (3.) That they shall be reserved to be tormented in a special manner at the day of judgment—namely, by the fearful shame and confusion with which they shall then be covered. "The Lord," says St Peter, "knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation; but to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be tormented; and especially them who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness," 2 Pet. ii. 9, 10. (4.) That they shall be condemned to hell-fire: "The unbelieving, and the abominable, and . . . whoremongers, and sorcerers, . . . shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8.

Q. 13. Does the Scripture express the grievousness of this sin of uncleanness in any other manner?

A. Frequently. (1.) Almighty God, speaking of two false prophets, says, "I will deliver them up to the king of Babylon, and he shall kill them before your eyes; and of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Juda that are in Babylon, saying, The Lord

make thee like Sedecias, and like Achab, whom the king of Babylon fried in the fire: because they have acted folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with the wives of their friends," Jer. xxix. 22. And He immediately adds, "for I am judge and witness, saith the Lord." (2.) Speaking of the ruin of the city of Niniveh, on account of the sins of its inhabitants, Almighty God expresses Himself thus: "Because of the multitude of thy fornications, . . . behold I come against thee, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms; and I will cast abominations upon thee, and will disgrace thee, and will make an example of thee," Nahum, iii. 4, 11. (3.) The Scriptures also, speaking of adultery, say, "This is a heinous crime, and a most grievous iniquity; it is a fire that devoureth even to destruction, and rooteth up all things that spring," Job, xxxi. 11. "Every man that passeth beyond his own bed, despising his own soul, and saying, Who seeth me? Darkness encompasseth me about, and the walls cover me, and no man seeth me. Whom do I fear? The Most High will not remember my sin. . . . And he knoweth not that the eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep, and looking into the hearts of men, into the most secret parts; . . . this man shall be punished in the streets of the city, and he shall be chased as a colt; and where he suspecteth not, he shall be taken. And he shall be in disgrace with all men, because he understood not the fear of the Lord. So every woman also that leaveth her husband, and bringeth an heir by another. For first, she hath been unfaithful to the law of the Most High; and secondly, she hath offended against her husband;

thirdly, she hath played the whore in adultery, and hath gotten her children of another man, . . . her children shall not take root, and her branches shall bring forth no fruit; she shall leave her memory to be cursed, and her infamy shall not be blotted out," Ecclus. xxiii. 25.

Q. 14. How does the heinousness of lust appear from its effects?

A. Its effects are many and most deplorable: (1.) It occasions blindness of the understanding, hardness of heart, and insensibility to the truths of eternity; coldness and aversion to God, a strong attachment to this world, and horror and despair with regard to the life to come. (2.) It frequently leads to other grievous sins: thus, it hurried Joseph's mistress to the blackest calumny and oppression of the innocent; David to adultery and murder; Solomon to idolatry; the two elders to calumny, perjury, and putting the innocent Susannah to death as far as lay in them. It hurries on many to murder their own child, both soul and body, by procuring abortion, or killing it when born; and it is one of those sins which the devil commonly uses to tempt those who fall into it, to concealment in confession, and thus throws them into a pit, out of which it is a miracle if ever they arise. (3.) If a person once becomes a slave to this vice, it is of such a dangerous nature that there is scarcely any hope of his conversion: thus, the wise man, speaking of the unchaste woman, says, "Her house inclineth to death, and her paths to hell; none that go in to her shall return again, neither shall they take hold of the paths of life," Prov. ii. 18. And the prophet Hosea declares that "they shall not set their thoughts to return to their God, for the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known

the Lord," Hos. v. 4. These are some of the fatal effects of impurity, which clearly show how dreadful and detestable a crime it is.

Q. 15. Are all the different degrees of this sin forbidden?

A. Such is the malignity of this vice, and so detestable is it in the sight of God, that every kind of it is strictly forbidden. Any voluntary and deliberate consent to the carnal pleasure of impurity, whether in the desires and thoughts of the heart or in immodest words, songs, books, unchaste embraces, looks or touches, except in the lawful use of marriage, is highly criminal in the sight of God. This appears from several reasons: (1.) Because one of the ten commandments—the ninth—expressly forbids all desires of this fatal crime: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife;" now "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." As therefore the sixth commandment forbids the criminal action, and the ninth the very desire which is the first motion of the will towards it, so all the intermediate degrees are strictly forbidden. (2.) Our Saviour expressly says, "You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say to you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart," Mat. v. 27, 28. Where we see that even the lustful desires of the heart, and unchaste looks, bring the guilt of adultery upon the soul in the sight of God. How much more will any voluntary delight in the carnal pleasure of lust, from unchaste words or actions, render the soul criminal before Him! (3.) Job says, "I have made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin; for what part should God above have in me, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?" Job, xxxi.

1—that is, I have made a firm resolution with myself not to admit any unchaste looks on a virgin, knowing that if I did so I should lose my part with God and His inheritance on high; and St Peter, describing the impious, "who," he says, "shall perish in their corruption," among other things says of them, "Having eyes full of adultery, and of sin that ceaseth not, alluring unstable souls, . . . children of malediction," 2 Pet. ii. 14. (4.) The Scripture expressly forbids all immodest words, as inconsistent with the sanctity of a Christian. "But fornication, and ALL UNCLEANNESS, let it not be so much as named among you as becometh saints," Eph. v. 3. (5.) Because all these degrees of impurity are not only criminal in themselves, and contrary to the law of God, but, from the peculiar malignity of this vice, are all incentives and temptations to greater degrees of guilt; and therefore all immodest books, songs, and conversations are highly unlawful, for "evil communications corrupt good manners," and "he who loves the danger shall perish in it," Ecclus. iii. 27.

Q. 16. What ought a Christian to think of plays and promiscuous dancing?

A. We may judge of this from the following passages of Scripture, and from reason: (1.) "Use not much the company of her that is a dancer, and hearken not to her, lest thou perish by the force of her charms," Ecclus. ix. 4. Now, "he who loves the danger shall perish in it." (2.) Job, describing those who indulge themselves in these things, tells us also how they end at last. "Their little ones go out like a flock, and their children dance and play, they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to hell," Job, xxi. 13, 14. (3.) We see what judgment Almighty God passes on these things from what He says in Isaias, "And the Lord said, Because

the daughters of Sion are haughty, and have walked with stretched-out necks and wanton glances of their eyes, and made a noise as they walked with their feet, and moved in a set pace; the Lord will make bald the crown of the head of the daughters of Sion, and the Lord will discover their hair. In that day the Lord will take away the ornaments of shoes and little moons, and chains, and necklaces, and bracelets, and bonnets, and bodkins, and ornaments of the legs, and tablets, and sweet balls, and ear-rings, and rings, and jewels hanging on the forehead, and changes of apparel, and short cloaks, and fine linen, and crisping-pins, and looking-glasses, and lawns, and head-bands, and fine veils, and instead of a sweet smell, there shall be a stench, and instead of a girdle, there shall be a cord; and instead of curled hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, hair-cloth," Isa. iii. 16. (4.) In baptism we solemnly renounce the pomps and vanities of the devil and the world. Now if promiscuous dancing and stage-plays and extravagant dress be not a part of these pomps and vanities, what are?

(5.) It is remarkable that among the people of God in the old law we read of no promiscuous dancing, much less of stage-plays. We read, indeed, of companies of women dancing upon some solemn occasions of joy, as of Mary the Prophetess, the sister of Moses, who, after the passage of the Red Sea, went out and led a chorus of women, singing praises to God; and of all the women in the reign of Saul who, after the defeat of Goliah, came out in singing and dancing, saying, "Saul hath killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands;" but we nowhere read of men and women dancing together. Such promiscuous dancing and stage-plays arose among the heathens, and from them were introduced among Christians. (6.) These entertainments are exceedingly dan-

gerous, and apt to raise the strongest temptations to impurity in the mind. The Holy Scriptures say, "Gaze not upon a maiden, lest her beauty be a stumbling-block to thee," Ecclus. ix. 5. "Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about upon another's beauty, for many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire," ver. 8. Now what is to be met with on these occasions but people of both sexes dressed in a manner to show their beauty to the best advantage, by which they become a snare to one another? "There," says the famous Petrarch, Dial. 24, "all liberty given to the hands, to the eyes, to the voice, there the noise of the feet, and of different musical instruments, the running about, and often the darkness of the night, that enemy of all modesty, extinguish fear and shame, and are the instruments to lust and impurity." Let every one who has frequented these things examine impartially his own heart, and he will be sensible of the danger that attends them; now he that loves the danger shall perish in it. (7.) These entertainments dissipate the mind, cool devotion, extinguish the fervour of piety, fill the soul with a thousand distracting idle ideas; and the least that can be said of them is, that the time spent there is time lost for eternity,—so we may conclude that these amusements are never useful, always dangerous, and generally pernicious to the soul. Those who fear God will therefore avoid them.

Q. 17. As this vice of impurity is so detestable and so dangerous, what must one do to avoid and escape its snares?

A. The principal preservatives against it are these three: I. To fly with horror from all the dangerous occasions—that is, from everything that tends to excite un-

chaste thoughts or ideas in the mind. Thus the eyes must be turned away from indecent and dangerous objects, the ears from hearing immodest discourse or obscene words; and if at any time a person be so situated that he cannot avoid hearing such words, he ought neither to show nor express approbation, for if he does he becomes no less guilty than those who speak them. Without this precaution of avoiding these occasions there is no security; everything else we can do will be to no purpose if we do not fly from the danger. Of this the Scriptures speak as follows: (1.) "Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not upon another's beauty; for many have perished by another's beauty, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire," Ecclus. ix. 8, 9. (2.) "Many by admiring the beauty of another man's wife have become reprobate, for her conversation burneth as a fire," Ecclus. ix. 11. (3.) "Sit not at all with another man's wife, nor repose upon the bed with her, . . . lest thy heart incline towards her, and by thy blood thou fall into destruction," Ecclus. ix. 12. (4.) "The lips of a harlot are like a honeycomb dropping, and her throat is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down into death, and her steps go as far as hell," Prov. v. 3. (5.) "I have found a woman more bitter than death, who is the hunter's snare; her heart is a net, and her hands are bands," Eccles. vii. 27. In which testimonies we see how much we ought to fly all looking, conversing, being in company with, or touching dangerous objects, if we desire to save our souls from being ruined by this vice. And for the same reasons all other occasions that lead to it are equally to be avoided, such as immodest looks, love-songs, reading plays, romances, &c.

II. To resist with vigour and resolution the first

attacks of the temptation. "Give not place to the devil," says the holy apostle St Paul, Eph. iv. 27; but "resist the devil, and he will fly from you," James, iv. 7. This sin commonly proceeds by degrees. The devil seldom tempts a virtuous person with the greater degrees of this vice at first; but if he succeed in a lower, this prepares the way to a higher. Hence our success depends in a great measure upon vigorously resisting the first beginnings, which are more easily overcome while the enemy is weak and we are strong: "Blessed is he that shall take and dash these little ones against the rock," Ps. cxxxvi. 9. Now these attacks may arise either from ourselves or from others. If bad thoughts arise in our own minds, the most effectual remedy is, upon first observing them, to beat them off as we would cast a spark of fire from our clothes, and to turn our mind to some good object, such as death, judgment, heaven, or hell; for the Scripture says, "In all thy works remember thy last things, and thou shalt never sin," Eccles. vii. 40; or, which is the most effectual of all, to Jesus Christ dying upon the cross, and with humble confidence beg His help and assistance. This is a shield which repels all the fiery darts of the enemy. Those who were stung by the fiery serpents in the wilderness were healed when they turned their eyes to the brazen serpent set up in the middle of the camp, as a figure of Christ upon the cross—so whosoever is stung by the infernal serpent with the temptations of impurity, will find an immediate remedy if he turn the eyes of his soul with humility and love to his blessed Saviour on the cross. But if the temptation arise from others, who either by immodest discourse, songs, or indecent liberties excite impure temptations in the mind, the only remedy is, to consider such

as angels of Satan, and to fly from them with abhorrence, for here there is no safety but in flight.

III. The third remedy is fervent prayer to be preserved from this detestable vice, accompanied with proper and discreet bodily mortification. "As I knew," says the wise man, "that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, and this also was a point of wisdom to know whose gift it was: I went to the Lord, and besought Him with my whole heart," Wis. viii. 21. This is one of that kind of devils of which our Saviour says that they "are not cast out but by prayer and fasting," Mat. xvii. 20. And St Paul declares, "That he chastised his body, and kept it in subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself should become a castaway," 1 Cor. ix. 27. He knew from experience how much the flesh warred against the Spirit, Rom. vii. and Gal. v. 17, and that the most effectual way to conquer the flesh in this dangerous battle was to weaken its strength by proper chastisements, and to keep it under subjection; therefore he declares that those who belong to Christ "have crucified their flesh with its vices and lusts," Gal. v. 24. Now, under prayer as a preservative against this vice is included not only vocal but also mental prayer, or meditation upon the great truths of eternity; and mortification includes not only fasting and corporal austerities, but also the practice of general self-denial.

Q. 18. Is it a sin to be tempted by immodest thoughts?

A. By no means; it is no sin to be tempted by any kind of evil thoughts: our Saviour Himself, who was incapable of sin, was tempted for our consolation. The sin is only committed when we yield to these thoughts, or voluntarily entertain and consent to them.

Section III.

Temperance or Sobriety.

Q. 19. What is the virtue of temperance?

A. Temperance is a virtue which directs us to the right and lawful use of all sensual pleasures in general; but here we are to consider it only as it regards the pleasures of eating and drinking. In this light it is called sobriety, and teaches us to observe due moderation in the use of meat and drink, so as never to exceed in quantity, nor be over-nice and delicate as to quality, nor give any signs of too great an attachment to those pleasures, either by speaking of them or by an excessive use of them; and the vices opposed to this are gluttony and drunkenness.

Q. 20. Is sobriety much recommended in Scripture?

A. It is very much recommended. (1.) As a virtue proper to all true Christians: "You all are children of the light and children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness, therefore let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober; for they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that are drunken, are drunken in the night; but let us who are of the day be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation," 1 Thes. v. 5. And St Paul, instructing his disciple Titus in the advices to be given to people in different states, both ecclesiastics, old men, women, and young men, always mentions sobriety as one necessary point to be recommended to them. See Tit. i. 7, 8; and ii. 2, 3, 5, 6. (2.) As one of the principal

things which the Son of God came down from heaven to teach mankind; for "the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in this world," Tit. ii. 12. (3.) As a necessary qualification of the hope of a Christian: "Wherefore having the loins of your mind girt up, being sober, trust perfectly in the grace which is offered you," 1 Pet. i. 13. (4.) As a most necessary means for avoiding the snares of the devil: "Be sober and watch, because your enemy the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. (5.) As a special gift from God: "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sobriety," 2 Tim. i. 7. (6.) As a virtue necessary for salvation, especially in women; for "Adam was not seduced, but the woman being seduced was in the transgression; yet she shall be saved through child-bearing, if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification with sobriety," 1 Tim. ii. 14. (7.) As greatly conducing to health of body and long life: "Sound and wholesome sleep is with a moderate man: he shall sleep till morning, and his soul shall be delighted with him," Ecclus. xxxi. 24. "He that is temperate shall prolong life," Ecclus. xxxvii. 34.

Section IV.

Gluttony and Drunkenness.

Q. 21. What is gluttony?

A. It is an inordinate love of the pleasure of eating, and shows itself either in eating to excess or being nice

and delicate as to the quality and dressing of one's food, in eating with voracity, out of due season.

Q. 22. Is gluttony a grievous sin?

A. On this head the Scripture teaches as follows: (1.) As to its effects on the body: "Be not greedy in any feasting, and pour not out thyself upon any meat; for in many meats there will be sickness, and greediness will turn to choler. By surfeiting many have perishd, but he that is temperate shall prolong life," Ecclus. xxxvii. 34. "He that loveth good cheer shall be in want; but he that loveth wine and fat things shall not be rich," Prov. xxi. 17. "Sleep is sweet to the labouring man, whether he eat little or much, but the fulness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep," Eccles. v. 11.

(2.) As to the soul, our Saviour, after relating all the terrors of His second coming, concludes with this command, "Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly; for as a snare it shall come upon all that sit upon the earth," Luke, xxi. 34. St Paul also says, "Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness"—rioting, that is, feasting, as in the original, Rom. xiii. 12, and Gal. v. He numbers gluttony among the works of the flesh which exclude from the kingdom of heaven. The same holy apostle gives it as a sign of those who serve not Christ, but adhere to false doctrine. "Such as these," says he, "serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly," Rom. xvi. 18. And he laments it in these touching words, "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory

is in their shame," Phil. iii. 18. (3.) As to the fatal consequences it produces, it was the sin of our first parents, and the original cause of all our woe in this miserable valley of tears; by it Esau lost his birthright; it brought down the wrath of God upon His people in the wilderness: "As yet their meat was in their mouths, and the wrath of God came upon them, and He slew the fat ones among them, and brought down the chosen men of Israel," Ps. lxxvii. 30. It was one great part of the crime of the rich glutton for which his soul was buried in hell. It was part of the crime of those who were destroyed by the Deluge, of which our Saviour says, "In the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even till that day in which Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not, till the flood came and took them all away," Mat. xxiv. 38. It was also part of the sin of Sodom, which brought upon that people such swift destruction: "Behold," says Almighty God, "this was the sin of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread and abundance, and the idleness of her and of her daughters," Ezech. xvi. 49.

Q. Is drunkenness a grievous sin?

A. Drunkenness is of its own nature a mortal sin, as appears from repeated testimonies of the Holy Scripture. (1.) "He that is delighted in passing his time over wine, leaveth a reproach in his strongholds," Prov. xii. 11. "Wine is a luxurious thing, and drunkenness riotous; whosoever is delighted therewith shall not be wise," Prov. xx. 1. "Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the colour thereof shineth in the glass; it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end it will bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk," Prov. xxiii. 31. "Wine drunken with excess is bitter-

ness to the soul. The heat of drunkenness is the stumbling-block of the soul, lessening strength and causing wounds," Ecclus. xxxi. 39. (1.) Many woes are pronounced against it. "Who hath woe? whose father hath woe? who hath contentions? who fall into pits? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time in wine, and study to drink off their cups," Prov. xxiii. 29. "Woe to you that rise up early in the morning to follow drunkenness, and to drink till the evening to be inflamed with wine," Is. v. 11. And not only against those who get drunk, but also those who are strong to drink great quantities, the woe is equally pronounced. "Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine, and are stout men at drunkenness," Isa. v. 22. "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkenness of Ephraim; . . . the drunkenness of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot," Isa. xxviii. 1, 3. (3.) It excludes from the kingdom of heaven: "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, . . . nor drunkards, . . . shall possess the kingdom of heaven," 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, . . . drunkenness, revellings, and such-like, of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of heaven," Gal. v. 19. (4.) It leads and exposes one to the greatest crimes, and to the most fatal consequences. By it Noah was exposed to the ridicule of his son, which brought a fatal curse upon a large branch of his posterity. By it Lot was induced to commit a double incest; by it Holophernes lost his life; by it Herod was hurried on to murder St John the Baptist. It changes men into brutes; robs them of reason; shortens their lives; consumes

their substance; ruins the peace of their families; foments their passions and lusts; makes them slaves to sensual inclinations; unfits them for all spiritual duties; exposes them to temptations; and shuts out the grace of God. Drunkenness, when habitual, is seldom or ever cured, but drags down the soul to hell.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE SEVENTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. 1. WHAT is the seventh commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not steal," Exod. xx. 15.

Q. 2. What is the tenth commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods," Exod. xx. 17.

Q. 3. What is the general end and design of these two commands?

A. To direct us in the duties we owe to our neighbour in regard to his temporal goods.

Q. 4. What are the sins forbidden by these commandments?

A. All unjust taking away or retaining what belongs to another against his will. This may be done either (1.) By secret fraud, which is called theft; or (2.) By open violence, which is called rapine or robbery. These commandments also forbid all unjust desires of our neighbour's goods or profits, which is the vice of avarice or covetousness.

Q. 5. What are the virtues enjoined by these commandments?

A. To render to every one his own, and to pay our just and lawful debts.

Section I.

Theft.

Q. 6. What is theft?

A. Theft is the unjust taking away or retaining what belongs to another against his will by secret fraud.

Q. 7. What do you understand by secret fraud?

A. All those hidden ways of taking our neighbour's goods—by stealing, cheating, deceiving, or imposing upon him when he is not sensible of the evil done.

Q. 8. Is theft a grievous sin?

A. It is of its own nature a very great and mortal sin, as is manifest from these following reasons: (1.) It is a breach of the law of nature, which forbids us to do to others what we would not have others to do to us; and there is nothing which we feel more keenly than to be robbed of our goods, either by force or fraud. (2.) It is a breach of justice, which obliges us to wrong no man, but to render to every man what is his. (3.) It is a great breach of charity; for it seldom fails to occasion great suffering of mind, and frequently of body, to our neighbour; for from this source arise anger, suspicions, rash judgments, quarrels, and enmity. (4.) It is a breach and violation of the positive law of God; for the seventh commandment expressly forbids unjust actions, and the tenth all unjust desires. Consequently every intermediate degree of wronging our neighbour in his goods, in thought, word, or deed, is strictly forbidden by this divine law. (5.) Besides the prohibition of the law, the word of God condemns it in the strongest manner, both in general and in regard to the particular kinds of it.

Q. 9. What does the Holy Scripture say against this vice in general?

A. The Word of God expressly forbids it, as contrary to the will of God and to the sanctification of our souls, and which, therefore, He will severely punish: "This is the will of God," says St Paul, "your sanctification, . . . that no man over-reach or deceive his brother in business; because the Lord is the avenger of all such things, as we have told you before, and we have testified," 1 Thes. iv. 6. Hence we find dreadful punishments threatened against those who are guilty of it. (1.) Poverty: "Some distribute their own goods and grow richer; some take away what is not their own, and are always in want," Prov. xi. 24. "Woe to him that heapeth together that which is not his own; how long also does he load himself with thick clay?" that is, ill-gotten goods, which, like mire, both burden and defile the soul. "Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee? and they be stirred up that shall tear thee, and thou shalt be a spoil to them?" Hab. ii. 6. "And I saw, and behold a roll flying, . . . the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. And the angel said to me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the earth; for every thief shall be judged as is there written; . . . and it shall come into the house of the thief, and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and it shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof," Zach. v. 1. A dreadful curse indeed! (2.) Short life, and often untimely death: "He that hath gathered riches, and not by right, in the midst of his days he shall leave them, and in his latter end he shall be a fool," Jer. xvii. 11. And how many are brought to disgrace when their dishonesty is discovered? how many brought to a shameful death in punishment

of it? (3.) The ruin and misery of their children. Thus, speaking of the unjust man, the Scripture says, "His children shall be oppressed with want," Job, xx. 10. "Woe to him that gathers together an evil covetousness to his house, that his nest may be on high, and thinketh he may be delivered out of the hand of evil. Thou hast devised confusion to thy house, . . . for the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the timber that is between the joints of the building shall answer," Hab. ii. 9. "He that buildeth his house at other men's charges, is as he that gathereth himself stones to build in the winter," Ecclus. xxi. 9—that is, his house shall soon fall, because in winter the lime will not bind nor fix the stones, so that it can have no duration.

II. It makes our prayers and all our other good works hateful and detestable to God. "Do not offer Me sacrifice any more," says He; "your incense is an abomination to Me; your feast-days I will not bear; your solemnities, My soul hates them; when you multiply prayer I will not hear; because your hands are full of blood," Isa. 1 — that is, of ill-gotten goods by injustice and cheating; "for the bread of the needy is the life of the poor; he who cheats him is a man of blood," Ecclus. xxxiv. 25. And a little after, "He who sheds blood, and he who defrauds the labourer of his hire, are brothers." Hence if such a one lift up his hand in prayer, his prayer is rejected; if he offer up sacrifice, it becomes an abomination from his hands.

III. It is expressly declared that it excludes from heaven: "But you do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of heaven?" 1 Cor. vi. 8. Nor is it to be wondered at that God so severely punishes this sin of injustice; for if those who do not give alms out

of what is their own shall have the sentence of eternal punishment pronounced upon them at the last day for this alone, Mat. xxv., what can they expect who defraud others? Can they hope to be admitted into heaven or to escape the flames of hell? Besides, our Lord has declared that what we do to our brethren we do to Him.

Q. 10. What does the Scripture declare of the different kinds of theft?

A. The Scripture takes notice, (1.) Of children who steal from their parents, and says, "He that stealeth anything from his father or from his mother, and saith, This is no sin, is the partner of a murderer," Prov. xxviii. 24. (2.) Of those who defraud labourers of their wages: "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth," James, v. 4. But, (3.) As sins of this kind are most commonly committed in buying and selling, by false weights and measures, and giving bad goods as sound, the Scripture is particularly severe against all who cheat in this manner: thus, "Thou shalt not have divers weights in thy bag, a greater and a less; neither shall there be in thy house a greater bushel and a less. Thou shalt have a just and true weight, and thy bushel shall be equal and true, that thou mayest live a long time upon the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee; for the Lord thy God abhorreth him that doth these things, and he hateth all injustice," Deut. xxv. 13. "A deceitful balance is an abomination before the Lord, and a just weight is His will," Prov. xi. 1. "Diverse weights and diverse measures, both are abominable before God," Prov. xx. 10. "As yet there is a fire in the house of the wicked, the trea-

sures of iniquity, and a scant measure full of wrath. Shall I justify wicked balances, and the deceitful weights of the bag? by which her rich men are filled with iniquity, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue was deceitful in their mouth; and I therefore began to strike thee with desolation for thy sins. Thou shalt eat, but thou shalt not be filled, . . . thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap, . . . that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof a hissing, and you shall bear the reproach of my people," Mich. vi. 10. "Woe to you that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," Isa. v. 20. This sellers do who conceal the faults of bad goods, and pass them off as sound; and buyers also who depreciate the goods they buy from ignorant people, and purchase them under value.

Q. 11. What are the most ordinary kinds of theft committed in the world, or who are most commonly guilty of it?

A. Besides those mentioned in the last question, the following are also guilty of it: (1.) Servants who waste their masters' goods, steal meat, drink, or other things for themselves or others; who sell what belongs to their master, and retain the money; and those who, in buying goods, overstate the price and appropriate the surplus. (2.) Labourers and workmen of all kinds who do their work insufficiently and exact the full price of sound work, or who, being employed by the day, protract the work beyond measure, in order to gain more by it. (3.) Those who have any trust or charge of other people's goods, and embezzle them to their own advantage. Here, besides the sin of injustice, there is also a grievous breach of trust. (4.) Those who

are in any public office and take bribes, or administer their office unjustly or unfaithfully, and exact the full reward. (5.) All those who, in any other circumstances, steal or embezzle what belongs to others.

Section II.

Rapine or Robbery.

Q. 12. What is rapine?

A. It is the unjust taking away, or retaining, what belongs to another against his will by open violence.

Q. 13. Is rapine a grievous sin?

A. The Word of God speaks of its mortal malice as follows, denouncing woes, destruction, and ruin to those and their families who are guilty of it: (1.) "Woe to thee that spoilest; shalt not thou thyself also be spoiled? When thou shalt have made an end of spoiling, thou shalt be spoiled," Isa. xxxiii. 1. (2.) "Woe to you that devise that which is good for nothing, and work evil in your beds; in the morning light they execute it, because their hand is against God. And they have coveted fields, and taken them by violence, and houses they have forcibly taken away, and oppressed a man and his house—a man and his inheritance; therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I devise an evil against this family, from which you shall not withdraw your necks," Mich. ii. 1. (3.) "Woe to him that buildeth up his house by injustice, and his chambers not in judgment; that will oppress his friend without cause, and will not pay him his wages; . . . thy eyes and thy heart are set upon covetousness and upon oppression, and running after evil works. Therefore . . . he shall

be buried with the burial of an ass, rotten, and cast forth without the gates of Jerusalem," Jer. xxii. 13. (4.) "Hear, . . . you that hate good and love evil, that violently pluck off their skins from them, and their flesh from their bones; who have eaten the flesh of my people, . . . and have flayed their skin from off them, and have broken and chopped their bones as for the kettle, and as flesh in the midst of the pot. Then shall they cry to the Lord, and He will not hear them; and He will hide His face from them at that time, as they have behaved wickedly in their devices," Mich. iii. 2. (5.) "This is the portion of the wicked man with God, the inheritance of the VIOLENT, which they shall receive of the Almighty; if his sons be multiplied, they shall be for the sword, and his grandsons shall not be filled with bread; they that shall remain of him shall be buried in death, and his widow shall not weep; . . . poverty, like water, shall take hold of him, and a tempest shall oppress him in the night," Job, xxvii. 13. (6.) It filled the cup of iniquity of Achab, who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, when he violently oppressed Naboth, and deprived him of his vineyard, 3 Kings, xxi. (7.) "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, . . . nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9.

Q. 14. Who are those who are guilty of rapine?

A. The most ordinary cases in common life are: (1.) Those who abuse their power and authority to deprive others unjustly of their goods and possessions, as Jezabel did to Naboth, 3 Kings, xxi. (2.) Those who by unjust vexations force others to sell them. (3.) Those who rob on the highway. (4.) Those who contract debt with workmen and merchants, and afterwards refuse to pay, or who delay payment to the injury

and prejudice of their creditors. (5.) Those who oppress the orphans, the widow, or the poor, and take advantage of their situation and necessities to extort money from them, which is of all others the most detestable kind of rapine in the sight of God, and against which He has expressed the greatest wrath and indignation in His Holy Scriptures.

Q. 15. What do the Scriptures say against oppressing the poor and helpless?

A. (1.) "Touch not the bounds of little ones, and enter not into the field of the fatherless; for their near kinsman is strong, and he will judge their cause against thee," Prov. xxiii. 10. (2.) He that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor is as one that sacrificeth the son in the presence of the father. The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; he that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood. He that taketh away the bread gotten by sweat, is like him that killeth his neighbour," Ecclus. xxxiv. 24. (3.) "The Lord will not accept any person against a poor man, and He will hear the prayer of him that is wronged. He will not despise the prayers of the fatherless, nor the widow, when she poureth out her complaint. Do not the widow's tears run down her cheek, and is not her cry against him that causeth them to fall? but from the cheek they go up even to heaven, and the Lord that heareth will not be delighted with them," Ecclus. xxxv. 16. (4.) "The praise of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment; . . . his children shall be oppressed with wants, and his hands shall render to him sorrow; . . . his bread in his belly shall be turned into the gall of asps within him. The riches which he hath swallowed he shall vomit up; God shall draw them out of his belly, . . . because he broke in and stript the poor; he hath violently taken

away a house which he did not build," Job, xx. 5, 10, 14, 19. (5.) "The hinges of the temple shall shriek in that day, saith the Lord God; many shall die; silence shall be cast in every place. Hear this, you that crush the poor, and make the needy of the land to fail, saying, when will the month be over, and we shall sell our wares? and the Sabbath, and we shall open the corn? that we may lessen the measure, and increase the sickle, and may convey in deceitful balances; that we may possess the needy for money, and the poor for a pair of shoes, and may sell the refuse of the corn? The Lord hath sworn against the pride of Jacob, surely I will never forget all their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein?" Amos, viii. 3. How dreadful are these testimonies of the Word of God! How deeply do they concern those who are guilty of these crimes!

Q. 16. Is there any particular way of oppressing the poor more wicked than others?

A. No doubt there are different degrees of it, according to the greatness of the extortion and the malice of the circumstances in which it is committed; but the Scriptures speak with particular abhorrence against oppressing the poor by usury.

Q. 17. What is usury?

A. Usury is the taking a recompense or reward for the loan of money, or other goods for consumption, merely for the use of the thing lent, where no just cause exists, extrinsic to the loan itself; for where such grounds actually exist, a moderate interest is allowable—that is, an interest not exceeding what is determined by public authority. To take more than is so determined, whether in goods or works, is usury; and if this be taken from the poor for money lent to them in their distress, it is

not only usury in the strictest sense, but is also a grievous oppression of the poor, because it is taking advantage of their difficulties to extort their goods or labour from them. The same thing is the case when meal, corn, or other goods, which are consumed in using, are lent instead of money, and such unjust and illegal recompense demanded for them.

Q. 18. Is usury a grievous sin?

A. Usury is of its own nature a mortal sin, whether taken from the rich or from the poor; but when taken from the latter there is the additional guilt of oppressing the poor. The Word of God speaks of it as follows: (1.) "Thou shalt not lend to thy brother money to usury, nor corn, nor any other thing," Deut. xxiii. 19. "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor, that dwelleth with thee, thou shalt not be hard upon him as an extortioner, nor oppress him with usuries," Exod. xxii. 25. And our Saviour in the Gospel says, "Lend, hoping for nothing thereby," Luke, vi. 35—that is, hoping for nothing merely as a recompense for the use of your money, which you give in loan; for what is allowable to be taken as interest for money lent, is not considered a recompense or reward for the loan, but a just compensation for the loss one's own interest sustains, or the danger to which the money is exposed while it remains in the borrower's hands. It is required, therefore, that there be such loss or danger in order to render the taking of interest lawful in the sight of God. (2.) It is laid down in Scripture as a condition of gaining heaven that we avoid this crime of usury. "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? or who shall rest in Thy holy hill? He that walketh without a blemish and doeth justice; . . . he that hath not put out his money to usury, nor taken bribes against the innocent," Ps. xiv. 6. "If a man be just, and do

judgment and justice, . . . and hath not wronged any man, but hath restored the pledge to the debtor, hath taken nothing away by violence, . . . hath not lent upon usury, nor taken any increase, . . . he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord," Ezech. xviii. 5, 8. (3.) The Scripture classes it with murder and adultery, and other such crimes, and declares it a detestable sin, bringing death to the soul. "He that is a robber, a shedder of blood, . . . and defileth his neighbour's wife, that grieveth the needy and the poor, that taketh away by violence, . . . that giveth upon usury, and taketh increase; shall such a one live? He shall not live; seeing he hath done all these detestable things, he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him," Ezech. xviii. 11, &c. Also Almighty God, describing the sins of Jerusalem, for which He condemns her, mentions this: "Thou hast taken usury and increase, and hast covetously oppressed thy neighbours, and thou hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God. Behold I have clapped my hands at the covetousness which thou hast exercised; . . . I will deprive thee in the nations, I will scatter thee among the countries," Ezech. xxii. 12.

Section III.

Avarice or Covetousness.

Q. 19. What is avarice?

A. It is an inordinate love, or desire, of money, or other worldly goods, so as to set one's heart upon them, and seek one's happiness in them, to be uneasy and solicitous about them, like the rich man in the Gospel, to whom our Saviour said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul

shall be demanded of thee, and then whose shall all those things be?"

Q. 20. Are there more kinds than one of this vice?

A. We may consider chiefly two kinds of it: the one, when a man so loves money as deliberately to use unjust means to procure it, as deceit, fraud, robbing, stealing, oppressing the poor, lies, perjury, and sacrilege. This is a mortal sin of the deepest dye; and in it is verified, in a particular manner, the words of the wise man: "There is not a more wicked thing than to love money, for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale," Ecclus. x. 10. The other kind is that which does not hurry a man on to such open acts of injustice, and appears in the eyes of the world more innocent, yet is also productive of the most pernicious consequences; and consists in this, that a man sets his heart too much on riches, pursues the acquisition of them too ardently, and adheres too tenaciously to what he already possesses. This kind is perhaps more dangerous than the former, as it is more hidden, and conceals itself under the mask of prudence and necessity; for nothing is more common in the world, than to see those who are guilty of it applauding themselves as wise and prudent, while they are looked upon by all that know them as the slaves of avarice.

Q. 21. By what signs shall a man know if he be guilty of this second kind of covetousness?

A. This may be known by the manner in which he acts in acquiring and in using riches, and when he loses them. To understand this, we must remember that the duty of a Christian is to love God above all things, and to seek for happiness only in Him and from Him; that we are come into this world only to save our souls, and that the goods of this world are only valuable in so far as they are made conducive to that end; consequently,

if we love riches or other worldly goods more than God, or prefer them to our salvation, we are guilty of a very high degree of covetousness or avarice; and our Saviour expressly declares that if we love anything more than Him we are not worthy of Him. Now, when our conduct is such, whether in the acquisition, possession, or loss of our worldly goods, as to show that we prefer them to God and our salvation, we are guilty of this vice of avarice. (1.) In acquiring riches: when a man allows his mind to be continually occupied about them, even in the time of his religious duties, and does not take the necessary care to banish these distracting thoughts, he has too great an attachment to them; for "where the treasure is, there will the heart also be." Again, if he neglects his spiritual concerns when they interfere with his worldly interest, is ready to transgress the commandments of God, to omit prayer, to neglect the public worship of God on days of obligation, to work on Sundays and holidays and the like; this is a still greater sign of his inordinate attachment to riches, and proves that he prefers them to God. And if he goes a step further, and uses unjust and unlawful means to acquire them, when he can do so undiscovered by the world, this is an evident proof how much this vice fills his heart. (2.) In the possession of them: when a man becomes proud and haughty on account of his riches, and trusts in them, as if nothing could oppose him; this is a great sign of his love and attachment to the goods of this world: hence St Paul writes to Timothy, "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God," 1 Tim. vi. 17. Also when a man has riches, and rather than part with them denies himself and his family the necessaries of life according to his station;

this is also an evident proof of inordinate attachment. Of this Solomon says, "There is also another grievous evil which I have seen under the sun; riches kept to the hurt of the owner; . . . all the days of his life he eateth in darkness, and in many cares, and in misery and sorrow," Eccles. v. 12, 16. In like manner, when a man will not part with his riches, even when charity requires it, is hard-hearted and close-handed towards the poor, like the rich glutton in the Gospel, he shows himself the slave of avarice; "He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?" 1 John, iii. 17. Lastly, when a man is unwilling to part with his money, even when justice demands it, refuses or delays to pay his just debts or his servants' wages, this also is a very evident proof of his inordinate love of riches. (3.) In the loss of them. Riches to a good man are like his clothes; he puts them off without pain: to a covetous man they are like his skin, he puts them off with exquisite torment: a good man, like Job, feels the loss when deprived of them, but immediately resigns himself to the will of Heaven, and blesses God with him: "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord;" but the covetous man, when any loss comes upon him, murmurs, repines, and complains, and becomes a prey to impatience and despair.

Q. 22. Is avarice of its own nature a grievous sin?

A. It is, and a sin against which the Word of God expresses the greatest abhorrence. (1.) Woes are pronounced against it by Jesus Christ Himself. "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation," Luke, vi. 24. And when the rich glutton in hell-fire implored Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the

tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue, the answer Abraham made him was, "Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented," Luke, xvi. 25. Now, by the rich are understood not simply those who have riches, but those who love them, and trust in them; for when our Saviour said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! the disciples were astonished at his words." But He explained His meaning to them, and said, "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," Mark, x. 23. Now the trusting in riches is one of the least degrees of covetousness shown in the possession of them, as we have seen above; if then even this lesser degree of avarice makes it so difficult for the rich to be saved, what will become of those who are guilty of the higher degrees of covetousness?

(2.) St Paul condemns it as an idolatry that excludes from heaven. "Be not deceived; neither fornicators . . . nor covetous . . . shall possess the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Know ye this and understand, that no fornicator, nor unclean, nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 5. Hence "the ways of every covetous man destroy the souls of the possessors," Prov. i. 19. (3.) Great evils are threatened against it. "Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord, . . . man and woman shall be taken, the ancient, and he that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned over to others, with their lands and their

wives together; . . . for from the least of them, even to the greatest, all are given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, all are guilty of deceit," Jer. vi. 11. "I saw the Lord standing upon the altar," says the prophet Amos, "and He said, Strike the hinges, and let the lintels be shook, for there is covetousness in the head of them all, and I will slay the last of them with the sword; there shall be no flight for them; though they go down even to hell, thence will My hand bring them out; and though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; and though they be hid in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them away from thence: and though they hide themselves from my eyes in the depth of the sea, there will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them; and if they go into captivity before their enemies, there will I command the sword, and it shall kill them. And I will set my eyes upon them for evil, and not for good," Amos, ix. 1. How dreadful are these words of the Almighty! "Go now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire," James, v. 1. (4.) It is the cause of numberless crimes, and exposes men to dreadful dangers. "They that will become rich fall into temptations, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition." For "the desire of money is the root of all evil; which some coveting have erred from the faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows," 1 Tim. vi. 9. Examples of this occur every day in common life, where we see numberless crimes: cheating, lying, perjury, wars, strife,

contention, anger, hatred, and the like, arising from this miserable source; and in the Scriptures we see how it produced hard-heartedness to the poor in the rich glutton, Luke, xvi; sacrilege, in Heliodoras, 2 Mac. iii; oppression of the poor by perjury and murder, as in Achab for Naboth's vineyard; telling a lie to the Holy Ghost, in Ananias and Sapphira; selling and betraying Jesus Christ, in Judas, &c.

Section IV.

Restitution and paying of Debts.

Q. 23. What is meant by restitution?

A. By restitution is meant giving back to the owner the goods that belong to him, either in kind or value, and repairing the unjust loss he has sustained.

Q. 24. Is restitution a duty of strict obligation?

A. Whosoever has taken away anything from another unjustly, by force or fraud, or has been the guilty cause of its being taken by others, or has in his possession goods, against the owner's will or knowledge, is bound by the strictest law of justice to make restitution, either in kind or value, and to make up the loss the owner has sustained, if he be able, otherwise he is incapable of receiving pardon for his sin; also, whosoever has injured his neighbour, or unjustly occasioned loss to him in his person, goods, or reputation, is bound by the same law of justice to make compensation, as far as he is able, otherwise his sin will never be forgiven.

Q. 25. How does this appear from the holy Scripture?

A. From the express law of Almighty God. (1.) "If

any man steal an ox or a sheep, and kill or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for one ox, and four sheep for one sheep," Exod. xxii. 1. "If that which he stole be found alive with him, either ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double," verse 4. "To do any fraud, either in ox, or in ass, or sheep, or raiment, or anything that may bring damage, the cause of both parties shall come to the gods" (*the judges*); "and if they give judgment, he shall restore double to his neighbour," verse 9. (2.) "Whosoever shall deny to his neighbour the thing delivered to his keeping which was committed to his trust, or shall by force extort anything, or commit oppression; or shall find a thing lost, and denying it, shall also swear falsely; or shall do any other of the many things wherein men are wont to sin; being convicted of the offence, he shall restore all that he would have gotten by the fraud, in the principal, and the fifth part besides, to the owner whom he has wronged," Levit. vi. 2. (3.) "If men quarrel, and the one strike his neighbour with a stone or with his fist, and he die not, but keep his bed; if he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, he that struck him shall be quit, yet so that he make restitution for his work, and for his expenses upon the physicians," Exod. xxi. 18. "If men quarrel, and one strike a woman with child, and she miscarry indeed, but live herself, he shall be answerable for so much damage as the woman's husband shall require, and as arbiters shall award," Exod. xxi. 22. (4.) "If any man hurt a field or a vineyard, and put in his beasts to feed upon that which is other men's, he shall restore the best of whatsoever he hath in his own field and in his vineyard, according to the estimation of the damage," Exod. xxii. 5.

Q. 26. Is the obligation of paying one's debts included in the law of restitution?

A. It certainly is; for to refuse to pay one's debts is to deprive another of his just due. To delay payment is to retain the property of another, and to expose the owner to great loss and inconvenience. It often proves even the ruin of tradesmen and merchants, and brings the debtor under the guilt of a great crime before God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Q. 1. WHAT is the eighth commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," Exod. xx. 16.

Q. 2. What is the principal end and design of this commandment?

A. To direct us in the use of our tongue with regard to truth, and in the duties we owe to our neighbour's reputation.

Q. 3. What are the sins forbidden by this commandment?

A. Lies of all kinds, whether in words or actions, and injuring our neighbour's reputation, whether by backbiting, detraction, or calumny.

Q. 4. What are the duties enjoined by this commandment?

A. To speak and witness the truth in all things, in our conversation, judgments, and compacts with others; to defend the reputation of the absent, and to restore his good name if we have injured it.

Section I.

Lies.

Q. 5. What is a lie?

A. A lie is a contradiction of the truth either in words or actions.

Q. 6. How many kinds of lies are there?

A. There are several kinds of lies; the most ordinary are these following: (1.) A jocose lie, which hurts nobody, and is spoken to please those present, or for excuse; as the lie of Sarah when she said she did not laugh, Gen. xviii. 15. (2.) An officious lie, which hurts no person, and is intended to be of service to others; as the lie of the Egyptian midwives to Pharaoh, Exod. i. 19. (3.) A malicious lie, which is injurious to God, or hurtful to our neighbour; as was the lie of the devil to Eve, when he said, "You shall not die," Gen. iii. 4. (4.) Dissembling, of which the Scripture says, "The dissembler with his mouth deceiveth his friend," Prov. xi. 9. (5.) Hypocrisy, which is, when a man puts on the outward appearance of piety and holiness, which he has not in his heart; such was the vice of the Pharisees, for which Christ denounces so many woes upon them. (6.) Adulation or flattery, which is, when a man praises his neighbour beyond the truth; as was the flattery of the people to Herod, when they cried, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" Acts, xii. 22. (7.) Boasting, when a man goes beyond the truth in praising himself. (8.) Breaking one's promise to his neighbour.

Q. 7. Is every lie of its own nature a sin?

A. Yes, every lie is of its own nature a sin, because it

is contrary to the truth, and therefore contrary to God, Who is truth; it is also an injury to our neighbour, by deceiving him.

Q. 8. Does this appear from the word of God?

A. Most manifestly. (1.) All lies, without exception, are there expressly forbidden: "Thou shalt fly lying," Exod. xxiii. 7. "You shall not lie, neither shall any man deceive his neighbour," Lev. xix. 11. "Be not willing to make any manner of lie, for the custom thereof is not good," Ecclus. vii. 14. "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak ye the truth every one with his neighbour," Eph. iv. 25. "Lie not one to another," Col. iii. 9. (2.) The Scripture declares it to be infamous, and that the just man shall hate it: "A lie is a foul blot in a man, and yet it will be continually in the mouth of men without discipline," Ecclus. xx. 26. "The just shall hate a lying word," Prov. xiii. 5. "The manners of lying men are without honour, and their confusion is with them without ceasing," Ecclus. xx. 28. (3.) The Scriptures also assure us that no liar can enter into heaven: "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. xxii. 15. In these testimonies it is plain that all lies, without exception, are forbidden, declared to be infamous, that those who commit them cannot enter into heaven; and consequently that all lies, without exception, are sinful. Hence our Saviour declares of lies that they are from the devil, "who," says He, "is a liar, and the father thereof," John, viii. 44.

Q. 9. But do we not read in Scripture that the Egyptian midwives were rewarded for telling an officious lie to Pharaoh, when they saved the children of the Israelities; and some of the servants of God told lies at

times for some good end, as Jacob did to gain his father's blessing?

A. The Egyptian midwives were indeed rewarded by God, not for telling a lie to Pharaoh, but for their humanity in saving the children, and because, as the Scripture expressly says, they "feared God," Exod. i. 21, and refused to murder the innocent children, as the king had commanded them, for fear of offending God. As to lies that may seem to have been told by holy persons in Scripture, some of the fathers have endeavoured to free them from guilt, by explaining their words in a mystical and parabolical sense; but though they told a real lie, this does not prove that certain lies are not sinful, but shows that even holy people are sometimes overcome, and do what is wrong, in which they are neither to be commended nor imitated. David was a man according to God's own heart, and a prophet, yet he committed adultery and murder; will it thence follow that adultery and murder are not sins?

Q. 10. Are all lies mortally sinful?

A. No, for jocose and officious lies, though in themselves really sinful, because contrary to the truth, and expressly forbidden by the Word of God, are not so great an evil as to break our peace with God, and are therefore only venially sinful.

Q. 11. Is it in any case lawful to tell even a venial lie, in order to procure some good end?

A. It never can be lawful to do a thing which is in itself sinful; and no good end whatsoever can alter the nature of what is intrinsically evil, otherwise there is no crime which would not find an excuse: besides, it can in no case be lawful to do what the law of nature and the positive law of God expressly forbid in all cases,

without exception; lastly, St Paul expressly declares that we must not do evil that good may come of it, Rom. iii. 8. And this he says when speaking of promoting the glory of God by telling a lie, declaring that it is a calumny against Christians to say that they hold it lawful to do evil that good may come. For these reasons it is the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church, that in no case, and for no good end whatever, not even to save the world from destruction, can it ever be lawful to tell the least lie. "No good end can, on any account, excuse the least lie; and to advance that pious frauds, as some improperly call them, can ever be properly used is no better than blasphemy. . . . To tell any lie whatever, in the least point relating to religion, is always to lie in a matter of moment, and as Catholic divines teach, and can never be excused from a mortal sin. . . . Good men may sometimes be too credulous in things in which there appears no harm. Nay, sometimes the more averse a person is to fraud himself, the more unwilling he is to suspect imposture in others. But no good man can countenance and abet a known fraud for any purpose whatever." So the pious and learned Mr Alban Butler, in the Introduction to the 'Saints' Lives,' page 18, Edit. Dublin, 1779.

Q. 12. Are some lies mortally sinful?

A. Besides those texts above cited, which show that all lies are sinful, there are others which show directly that some kinds of them are mortally sinful; such are these following: (1.) "Six things there are which the Lord hateth," and two of these are "a lying tongue, and a deceitful witness that uttereth lies," Prov. vi. 16, 17, 19. Also, "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xii. 22. (2.) "The mouth that lieth, killeth the

soul," Wis. i. 11. "A thief is better than a man that is always lying; but both of them shall inherit destruction," Ecclus. xx. 27. (3.) "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The bloody and deceitful man the Lord will abhor," Ps. v. 7. "But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8.

Q. 13. How shall we know when a lie is mortally sinful?

A. A lie is mortally sinful when, besides being contrary to the truth, it is opposed to any of those virtues which are necessary to salvation, such as faith, hope, charity, justice, and religion; and when it is attended with scandal, or confirmed with an oath. Hence every lie with regard to the truths revealed by Jesus Christ is a mortal sin, and contrary to faith.

Flattery, by which vice is praised as good, and virtue condemned or despised as evil, is mortally sinful, and contrary both to faith and charity. "Wo to you," say the Word of God, "who call good evil, and evil good," Isa. v. 20.

Hypocrisy, by which a man puts on a cloak of piety the better to conceal his wickedness, is mortally sinful, being contrary to the love both of God and our neighbour, and to religion also. Of hypocrites St Paul says, "They have an appearance indeed of godliness, but deny the power thereof; . . . they resist the truth, being men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 5, 8.

So also, any lie that notably injures our neighbour in his person, goods, or reputation, is mortally

sinful, because contrary both to justice and charity. Such was the false accusation of the elders against Susannah, which tended directly to ruin her reputation and to take away her life. Such also was the lie of Joseph's mistress against him to her husband.

In like manner, any lie that occasions great scandal is a mortal sin; and hence lies in priests and religious persons, even in small matters, are always dangerous on account of the indignity done to their own character, and they are of mortal guilt when the people are emboldened by their example to make light of lies.

Lastly, any lie, however small in itself, if confirmed by an oath, is always a mortal sin, because it is a grievous insult to God Almighty to call upon Him to witness a lie, whether in great or small matters.

Q. 14. What obligation does a promise bring upon one?

A. Every lawful promise imposes a strict obligation of verifying what one has said, by fulfilling his promise; because by a promise we give our neighbour a full right to the performance of the thing promised in its proper time; we pledge our faith, and oblige ourselves to do it.

Q. 15. What kind of crime is it to break one's faith or promise given to another?

A. It is a double sin, being both against justice and truth. It is against justice, because it deprives another of what he has a full right to; and it is against truth, because it falsifies the faith we plighted by promising; and if the promise had been confirmed by oath, the breach of it adds to these two the guilt of perjury, makes it a crime of triple malice, and therefore a most grievous mortal sin.

Q. 16. Are we obliged to keep our faith or promise with all mankind, though of a different religion from ourselves?

A. Difference of religion makes no difference in the nature of justice and truth between man and man; and therefore it is the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church, that a lawful promise, made to any person, whether Mahometan, Jew, heretic, or heathen, imposes a strict and absolute obligation of performance, if possible: and she has defined, in one of her general councils, that the promiser is then, and then only, freed from any further obligation, when he has done all in his power to fulfil it. Coun. Constance.

Q. 17. Is it lawful at any time to use mental reservations and equivocations?

A. The Catholic Church has declared that mental reservations and equivocations are always lies, and therefore always sinful, and if used when one is upon oath are perjury, and never can be lawful for any end whatsoever. To assert the contrary is condemned by Pope Innocent XI. in the year 1679, along with other similarly scandalous antichristian propositions.

Q. 18. What is meant by mental reservations and equivocations, properly such?

A. When a person in his own mind puts a sense on his words different from their plain, natural, and usual meaning, and which the hearers cannot possibly perceive, and have no grounds or occasion to suspect, he is guilty of mental reservation.

Q. 19. What is meant by mental reservations and equivocations, not properly such?

A. When the words used have, either in themselves or from circumstances, two natural and plain significations, and the speaker uses them in one sense, and the

hearer receives them in the other; or when they have both a literal and spiritual meaning, as when our Saviour said of St John the Baptist that "he was Elias;" and St John himself said, "I am not Elias." In such cases, if the hearers be deceived, it is their own fault, not a lie in the speaker.

Section II.

Of Defaming our Neighbour.

Q. 20. In how many ways may one defame his neighbour?

A. This may be done in two ways, either in our own minds, by suspicions and rash judgments; or in the minds of others, by calumny and detraction.

Q. 21. What is rash judgment?

A. It is judging evil of our neighbour without a reasonable cause. The conduct of the Pharisee in the Gospel is an instance of this vice; for, full of the vain idea he had conceived of his own excellence, he despised the poor publican, and condemned him without any other grounds than merely because he saw he was a publican, contrary even to all the signs of sincere repentance which appeared in him; without any condescension to the frailty of human nature, and the violence of passion and temptation; and hurried on through the blindness of his own pride and self-conceit.

Q. 22. In how many ways may this sin be committed?

A. In several different ways; the most common of which are these: (1.) When we form a bad opinion, and conceive a dislike of any one at first sight, and,

without sufficient grounds, judge evil of him. (2.) When we attribute to a bad motive any good or indifferent action of his, which may arise from a good intention. (3.) When upon seeing him commit anything sinful, we immediately, and without other reason, judge him to be addicted to that sin. (4.) When we judge his virtues or good dispositions to be vices, his humility mean-spiritedness, his meekness and patience cowardice, and his equanimity in bearing crosses to be constitutional apathy: thus our Saviour says of the Pharisees, "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man that is a glutton, and a wine-drinker, a friend to publicans and sinners," Mat. xi. 18. (5.) When we presume rashly to judge another with regard to the future, as when we judge an habitual sinner to be a reprobate abandoned by God, and that he will never be converted. (6.) When we rashly pronounce our neighbour guilty of what he is accused without hearing his defence.

Q. 23. Is it a grievous sin to judge evil of our neighbour rashly?

A. If the evil we judge of him be grievously sinful, it is certainly a great sin. (1.) Rash judgment is expressly forbidden by Christ, under the penalty of being ourselves severely judged: "Judge not, that you may not be judged; for with what judgment you judge you shall be judged," Mat. vii. 1. St Paul repeats the same prohibition: "Judge not before the time, until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness," 1 Cor. iv. 5. (2.) It shows a great corruption of heart; for none are more ready to judge rashly of others than those who are themselves

guilty; according to that of the wise man, "The fool when he walketh in the way, whereas he himself is a fool, esteemeth all men fools," Eccles. x. 3; and this is what renders him inexcusable: "Wherefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou dost the same thing which thou judgest," Rom. ii. 1. "Thou hypocrite," says Jesus Christ to all such, "cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye," Mat. vii. 5. (3.) It commonly arises from a great degree of pride, which makes a man usurp an authority that does not belong to him, but to God alone; hence, "He that judgeth his brother judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one Lawgiver and Judge, Who is able to destroy and deliver; but who art thou that judgest thy neighbour?" Jas. iv. 11. Who gave you authority to do what belongs to God alone? "Who art thou," says St Paul also, "that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth," Rom. xiv. 4. "But thou, why judgest thou thy brother? or why dost thou despise thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, . . . so then every one of us shall render an account to God for himself; let us not therefore judge one another any more," ver. 10. It is pride that makes us usurp this authority, from the false idea we have of our own penetration; it is pride that makes us attribute to ourselves the knowledge of our neighbour's heart and intentions, which belongs to God alone, Who says, "I am the Lord, Who search the heart and try the reins," Jer. xvii. 10. It is pride that makes us take pleasure in thinking worse of others than of ourselves; it is pride that makes us blind to our own faults,

and clear-sighted to detect faults in others. In this we imitate the proud Pharisee, who was condemned for it, notwithstanding all his other good works. (4.) It most frequently arises from envy and hatred, which make us always take in a bad sense whatever we see in our neighbour. In this we imitate the behaviour of the Pharisees to Christ Himself, for which so many woes were pronounced against them in the Gospel. (5.) It is most injurious to our neighbour, depriving him unjustly of his reputation in our mind. (6.) It produces the most fatal effects; it nourishes pride, hatred, and envy, occasions slander, and extinguishes charity and brotherly love in the soul.

Q. 24. But when we see strong proofs, is it not lawful to judge another guilty?

A. It is lawful to judge according to the proofs when they are well founded, and when the accused person is heard in his own defence; but what appear strong proofs are often upon examination found fallacious, especially when the accused person comes to be heard in his own defence. The proud Pharisee thought he had proof to condemn the publican as a sinner, and yet he was a saint; the other Pharisee thought Mary Magdalen a great sinner, and yet she also at that time was a saint. He also judged that our Saviour could not be a prophet, because He allowed her, whom he considered a sinner, to touch Him; and yet how grievously was he mistaken! Joseph's master thought his wife's accusation a good proof of guilt, especially when she showed him his garment in her hand; and yet Joseph was innocent. The accusation and testimony of the two elders was thought sufficient proof of Susannah's guilt, and yet it was most fallacious; and what stronger proof could there be in appearance against the Blessed Virgin than

when St Joseph found her with child? and yet she was the immaculate mother of God. These and similar examples show how little trust can be put in appearances, however convincing they may seem, and therefore how cautious we ought to be never to believe our neighbour guilty without a thorough examination, and without hearing what he has to say in his own defence. Indeed, so great is the wickedness of the world, that judgments, even upon slight grounds, to the prejudice of our neighbour, are too often really true; but it is much better to judge well of a thousand undeserving people than to judge evil unjustly of one who does not deserve it. In the former case we run no hazard for our souls; nay, it is an act of charity, "which thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. xiii. 5. But in the latter we bring upon our souls the guilt of grievous sin; and in all cases where we judge rashly, we run the risk of being deceived, besides the sin of rash judgment.

Q. 25. What is detraction and calumny?

A. For the full understanding the nature of this sin, we must consider three kinds of it: (1.) Calumny or slander, which is speaking evil of one's neighbour knowing it to be false, as did the two elders when they accused Susannah of adultery. (2.) Detraction, which is telling evil of one's neighbour, which, though true, is secret, or known only to a few, because this is detracting or derogating from our neighbour's character unjustly and uncharitably. (3.) Backbiting, which is speaking with a malicious pleasure of the known faults of one's neighbour. (4.) Telling tales and reports to the prejudice of our neighbour which we do not know to be true or false, secret or known; and this kind always partakes of the malice of some or other, and generally of all the other three.

Q. 26. Is it always a sin to speak of the faults of others?

A. If the crime of our neighbour be true—if we be certain of it, and speak of it only to those whose business it is to remedy it,—this, instead of being a sin, is an act of charity, and what our Saviour commands, when private admonitions have no effect, or might do harm; for then He says, "tell the Church," Mat. xviii. 17. (2.) If the fault of our neighbour be certainly known to us, but not public, or at least not known to those to whom we tell it, and that it be necessary for them to know it, in order to prevent their being injured, if we tell it to them alone, purely from the motive of preventing evil, this is not detraction; for we must not save the reputation of the guilty to the prejudice of the innocent. (3.) If the thing be certain and public, and we speak of it, not out of hatred to the person, but merely as a thing that has occurred, and rather feel sorrow for it, and endeavour to excuse and extenuate it, this also may be done without sin; but such is the malignity of our nature, that it is difficult in such cases not to offend against charity by despising the guilty person, or condemning him harshly, and therefore much caution is required. (4.) If the thing said be doubtful or uncertain, but of so trifling a nature as to do little or no harm to our neighbour's character, our speaking of it may also be done without great fault, especially as we may reasonably suppose our neighbour would not take it amiss though it should come to his ears. (5.) But if the evil said be a notable injury to our neighbour's reputation—if we know it to be false, or are not certain it is true—or if certain it is true, we know it is yet a secret—or if public and true, we speak of it from malice and hatred, despising our neighbour, and exposing him to the

contempt of others,—in all these cases we are guilty of a grievous sin.

Q. 27. How does this appear?

A. From several reasons. (1.) If what we say to the notable detriment of our neighbour's good name be false, it is a grievous breach of charity, justice, and truth. (2.) If it be true indeed, but secret, our telling it is a grievous breach of charity and justice. (3.) If it be true and public, but we speak of it out of hatred and ill-will, and so as to expose him to the contempt of others, it is a grievous breach of charity.

Q. 28. How is it a breach of justice?

A. Because when the ill we say is either false, or, though true, is yet secret, our telling it robs the absent of his reputation, and of the favour of others, which is doing him a great injustice; for if the robbing one of his goods be a grievous breach of justice, robbing him of his good name and the favour of others is much more so, because the Scripture says, "A good name is better than great riches, and good favour is above silver and gold," Prov. 22. 1.

Q. 29. But if the thing said be true, has not the person lost all title to his good name?

A. To this it is answered: (1.) Allowing that he has lost all title to it, by what authority can you take it from him? If you knew a person had goods in his possession to which he had lost all title, can you or any private person in justice take them from him? If you knew a person had murdered his neighbour, and by that means had lost all right to his own life, could you in justice take his life from him? Certainly not; the punishment for crimes of any sort does not belong to private persons, till the guilty person be properly tried, convicted, and his crime made legally known; consequently, though

your neighbour had done anything for which he loses his title to his good name, if this be known only to you, or to a few, you have no title to publish it to others, and deprive him of the good opinion they may still have of him; and therefore it is injustice in you to do so. (2.) On what grounds do you say he has lost all title to his good name? Is it because he has done some evil action? Let him who has never done any ill be his accuser. Who is there that has not done some such action? or rather that does not too frequently do so? Does every one then lose all title to his good name by such means? Certainly not. One may be a good man, and justly esteemed, though he fails in some things; and therefore, while his failings are secret, or known to a few, it is cruel injustice to publish them, and thereby rob him of the esteem that others have for him. (3.) With regard even to the ill itself, which is known in secret to you, how can you say that he has not sincerely repented of it, and made his peace with God? and that he is not sensible of his error, and determined never to fall into any such fault again? In this case, he certainly has as full a right as ever to his good name, and therefore it would be the highest injustice to deprive him of it by publishing his secret faults.

Q. 30. How are the sins of calumny and detraction, and backbiting, a breach of charity?

A. In several ways. (1.) It is a breach of charity to exercise any act of hatred or contempt of our neighbour, and on this account, speaking of the known faults of others out of hatred or with contempt is a breach of charity. (2.) It is a breach of charity to expose our neighbour to the contempt and ridicule of others, because we certainly would not wish that he should do this to us; and we feel from experience that nothing

gives us more sensible pain than to hear that our conduct has been criticised in any company, even though all said was true. (3.) What you say against your neighbour may come to his knowledge, afflict him, and excite anger, hatred, and displeasure. Now to give occasion to this without necessity is a breach of charity, even though what you say be true, but much more if doubtful or false. (4.) It is also a breach of charity towards those who hear you, because it destroys their esteem for their neighbour, and excites temptations of suspicion and rash judgment against him. Of all this the detractor is the guilty cause.

Q. 31. What does the Word of God say of these sins?

A. It speaks of them with the greatest horror. (1.) It gives the following description of those who are guilty of them: "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness," Rom. iii. 13. Also, "They have whetted their tongues like a sword; they have bent their bow, a bitter thing, to shoot in secret the undefiled," Ps. lxiii. 4. "If a serpent bite in silence, he is nothing better that backbiteth secretly," Eccles. x. 11. (2.) It frequently prohibits them in the strongest terms. "Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbour? Let it die within thee, trusting that it will not hurt thee," Ecclus. xix. 10. "Refrain your tongue from detraction, for an obscure speech shall not go for nought, and the mouth that lieth kills the soul," Wis. i. 11. "My son, . . . have nothing to do with detractors; for their destruction shall rise suddenly: and who knoweth the ruin of both?" Prov. xxiv. 21. (3.) It declares them hateful to God and man. "Thy mouth hath abounded with evil, and thy tongue hath framed deceits; sitting thou didst speak against thy

brother, and didst lay a scandal against thy mother's son. These things thou hast done, and I was silent. Thou thoughtest, unjustly, that I should be like to thee; but I will reprove thee, and set thy face before thee," Ps. xlix. 19. "Six things there are which the Lord hateth, and the seventh His soul detesteth: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked plots, feet that are swift to run into mischief; a deceitful witness that uttereth lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren," Prov. vi. 16. And therefore "a false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape," Prov. xix. 5. In the sad list of crimes of which the heathens were guilty, as described by St Paul, Rom. i. 30, detraction is particularly mentioned, and declared to be hateful to God; and the wise man says that "the detractor is the abomination of the men," Prov. xxiv. 9; on all which accounts St Paul gives this general rule, which he commands the pastors of souls, in the person of Titus, to instil into the minds of their people: "Admonish them . . . to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, not to be litigious, but gentle, showing all meekness towards all men," Titus, iii. 1. St James also gives this command: "Detract not one another, my brethren; he that detracteth his brother, or he that judgeth his brother, detracteth the law, and judgeth the law," James, iv. 11. Besides these declarations of Holy Scripture, we may observe, (4.) To speak ill of our neighbour is contrary to the example of Jesus Christ, Who was so tender of the reputation of others that He would not declare who it was that was to betray Him. He allowed even Judas to receive the holy communion unworthily rather than disclose his crime to the other apostles; and though He knew that within a few hours it would be known to

the whole people, yet for our instruction He would not be the one to declare it. (5.) It is a base and cowardly vice stabbing our neighbour's reputation behind his back, when he has no opportunity of defending himself. Of this Job particularly complains when he says, "Even fools despise me; and when I was gone away from them, they spoke against me," Job, xix. 18. (6.) It often produces the most fatal consequences, as in Joseph's imprisonment, Susannah's condemnation, and the murder of eighty-five innocent priests, by King Saul, from the calumny of Doeg. (7.) It often recoils on the calumniators in their severe punishment, as in the elders that accused Susannah, and in the enemies of Daniel. (8.) It is the source of numberless quarrels, dissensions, and animosities, especially in tale-bearing—that is, telling in one place what was said or done in another, and telling to one what others have said of him, often magnifying, and putting it in a very different light from what it was when first said. Against this species of it, God has expressed a particular detestation: "Thou shalt not be a detractor, nor a whisperer among thy people," Levit. xix. 16. "Be not called a whisperer, and be not taken in thy tongue and confounded, for confusion and repentance is upon a thief, and an evil mark of disgrace upon the double-tongued, but to the whisperer hatred, enmity, and reproach," Ecclus. v. 16. "The tale-bearer shall defile his own soul, and shall be hated by all, and he that shall abide with him shall be hateful; but the silent and wise man shall be honoured," Ecclus. xxi. 31. "The whisperer and the double-tongued is accursed, for he hath troubled many that were at peace. The tongue of a third person hath disquieted many, and scattered them from nation to nation. It hath destroyed the strong cities of the rich, and hath overthrown the houses

of great men. It hath cut in pieces the forces of people, and undone strong nations. The tongue of a third person hath cast out valiant women, and deprived them of their labours. He that hearkeneth to it shall never have rest, neither shall he have a friend on whom he may repose," Ecclus. xxviii. 15.

Q. 32. Is it a sin to give ear to calumny and detraction?

A. It is a sin to give ear to evil spoken of the absent in two cases: (1.) When one induces another to speak ill of the absent, by commanding, exhorting, questioning, or otherwise exciting or encouraging him to it. (2.) When one consents to, and takes pleasure in, hearing evil spoken of his neighbour; for St Paul, relating the crimes of the heathens, among which detraction holds a conspicuous place, says that "not only they who do such things are worthy of death, but they also who consent to them that do them," Rom. i. 32.

Q. 33. How, then, ought one to behave when he hears his neighbour ill spoken of?

A. (1.) He ought to fly such company as far as he can; for the Scripture says, "Let detracting lips be far from thee," Prov. iv. 24. And, "My son, fear the Lord and the king, and have nothing to do with detractors," Prov. xxiv. 21. "Hedge thy ears with thorns, and hear not a wicked tongue," Ecclus. xxviii. 28. This was the practice of the royal prophet, who says, "The man that in private detracted his neighbour, him did I persecute; with him that had a proud eye, and an insatiable heart, I would not eat," Ps. c. 5. (2.) Make it a constant rule, when you hear evil spoken of the absent in company, always to take their part, excusing and defending them, and telling any good you know of them. It is true,

indeed, that none are to be found who have not some faults, but it is no less true that few are so bad as not to have some good qualities. The pride and malice of our hearts make us take a pleasure in speaking of the faults of others, and overlooking their good qualities, but true Christian charity, as it "thinketh no evil," so it speaketh none—as it moves us to do to others what we wish others would do to us, so it enjoins us to oppose the good we know of our neighbour as a counterbalance to the ill which we hear spoken of him. The one is as easily done as the other, and whoever wishes to preserve the innocence of his own soul will follow the law of charity rather than the suggestions of pride and malice. (3.) Where it can be done with prudence, reprove the detractor, and admonish him of the evil he does. Where this is thought imprudent, show displeasure in your looks and manner at the conversation, and keep silence. "The north wind driveth away rain, so doth a sad countenance a backbiting tongue," Prov. xxv. 23. One great encouragement to backbiting is the pleasure the hearers seem to take in it; remove this, and it will soon end. (4.) Turn the conversation, even abruptly, to some other subject, without seeming to take notice of what was being said. (5.) Never be rash in believing what you hear against the absent, till at least you hear what they have to say for themselves.

Q. 34. When one has injured his neighbour's reputation by any of these sins, what is he obliged to do?

A. He is obliged to do all he can to restore his good name, for if one who wrongs his neighbour in his riches is obliged to restitution, how much more he who takes away his good name unjustly? for "a good name is better

than riches." Now this is a most difficult thing to do on many accounts, for it requires great humility indeed to retract what one has said, and even done; few will believe the retractation. Evil soon spreads; the retractation not so rapidly,—and this consideration shows how mischievous is detraction.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. 1. WHAT are the ninth and tenth commandments?

A. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods," Exod. xx. 17.

Q. 2. What is the end and design of these commandments?

A. We have already seen that they principally regard sins of lust and injustice, and we have considered them in that light along with the sixth and seventh commandments. But besides, they are also designed to direct us in the care we ought to have over our hearts, in avoiding evil thoughts, and employing our minds on good objects.

Q. 3. Do evil thoughts grievously offend God?

A. There can be no doubt of it; for whatever it is a sin to do or to speak, it is likewise a sin to consent to in thought; and our Saviour says, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man," Mat. xv. 19—that is, these various sins have their seat, properly speaking, in the heart, and their malice consists precisely in the consent of the will.

When this consent is given, the sin is immediately committed before God, and the soul defiled by them; hence our Saviour says again, "I say to you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart," Mat. v. 28. And the Scripture says, "Evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xv. 26; and "perverse thoughts separate from God," Wis. i. 3. The sin of the angels was a sin of thought only; and indeed many of the most grievous sins men commit are sins of thought, and completed in the heart — as pride, envy, and hatred, the outward actions being only the effects they produce. These actions often contain a malice distinct from what passes in thought, on account of the injury done to others.

Q. 4. In what manner are sins of thought committed?

A. We must here carefully observe the difference between the temptation of evil thoughts and the sin committed by them. When evil thoughts of whatever kind come into our mind without our giving occasion to them, though they remain there ever so obstinately against our will, yet they are not sinful; they are the temptations by which the devil endeavours to draw us into sin, but in themselves they are not sins, because not wilful; for though they be in our mind, they are there against our will, forced upon us by the malice of our spiritual enemies. Nay, if we behave as we ought under them, instead of injuring the soul, they will be of profit to it; because the fidelity we show to God in resisting them will increase His grace in our soul, obtain a more ample reward for us in heaven, and serve to implant the contrary virtues more deeply in our hearts. The sin committed by evil thoughts arises from our making these thoughts our own. When they obtrude themselves

against our will, and we continue to abhor and reject them, they are not ours, but the darts of the enemy seeking to ruin us, and we are not accountable for them; but when by the consent of our will they become our own, we commit sin by them. Now this may be done in several different ways: (1.) If we love the evil object, and willingly take pleasure in thinking on it. Of this the Scripture says, "He that loveth iniquity hateth his own soul," Ps. x. 6. "They became abominable, as those things were which they loved," Hos. ix. 10. And therefore "be not delighted in the paths of the wicked, neither let the way of the evil men please thee," Prov. iv. 14. For "if I have looked at iniquity," says David, "in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," Ps. lxv. 18. (2.) If we consent to any evil with our will, though we go no further, or if we consent to its being done by others, we immediately become guilty before God. Hence the Scripture says, "Take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord thy God," Tob. iv. 6; for "they who do such things are worthy of death; and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them," Rom. i. 32. And our Saviour pronounces a woe against the Pharisees for consenting to the evil deeds of their forefathers: "Woe to you who build the monuments of the prophets, and your fathers killed them; truly you bear witness that you consent to the doings of your fathers," Luke, xi. 47. (3.) The sin becomes still greater if we go further, and desire the evil object; and this is what is expressly and directly forbidden by the ninth and tenth commandments. (4.) We also sin by thought when we rejoice at any evil, whether done or intended to be done by ourselves or others. Thus the

Scripture, describing wicked men, says, they "leave the right way, and walk in dark ways; they are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in most wicked things; whose ways are perverse, and their steps infamous," Prov. ii. 13.

Q. 5. What are the means by which we may be preserved from sins of thought?

A. Chiefly the following: (1.) A constant vigilance or guard over our heart, that no evil may enter there to hurry us away before we are aware: "With all watchfulness keep thy heart, because life issueth out from it," Prov. iv. 23. (2.) Resolutely to cast away all evil thoughts on first observing them, as we throw off a spark of fire that falleth on our clothes. (3.) Immediately to turn our thoughts to Jesus Christ upon the cross, and with humble and fervent prayer to beg His help against them if they prove obstinate. (4.) To renounce them with contempt and disregard, and make acts of the contrary virtues. (5.) But the most effectual preservative against them is to walk in the presence of God, and employ our minds as much as possible upon pious and good objects, which will both exclude evil thoughts and bring down a great blessing from God. "My son," says He, "Give Me thy heart, and let thy eyes keep My ways," Prov. xxiii. 26. "Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence. In all thy ways think on Him, and He will direct thy steps," Prov. iii. 5.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE SEVEN CAPITAL AND DEADLY SINS.

Q. 1. WHAT are the seven capital or deadly sins?

A. They are pride, covetousness, envy, lust, gluttony, anger, and sloth. They are called capital sins because they are the root of all other sins, and they are called deadly, because they are of their own nature mortal and banish the grace of God from the soul, though occasionally their acts may be only venial, from the smallness of the matter, the incompleteness of the acts themselves, or from the circumstances attending them. We have already seen and considered five of them when explaining the commandments to which they belong—namely, covetousness, envy, lust, gluttony, and anger—when we also had occasion to speak of the opposite virtues. There remain to be explained here the other two, pride and sloth, with their opposite virtues, humility and fervour of spirit.

Section I.

Of Pride.

Q. 2. What is pride?

A. Pride is an inordinate esteem and love of our own excellence, accompanied with pleasure in thinking ourselves superior to what God has made us, and a desire of being so esteemed by others: according to St Paul, "If any man thinks himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," Gal. vi. 3. It may be divided into four different branches, which are directly opposed to the four distinguishing characters of true humility.

(1.) Humility enlightened by divine faith teaches us that of ourselves we are nothing; that our very being, and every qualification or good which we possess, is the gift of God, wholly dependent upon him, and essentially subjected to his good pleasure, for "every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights," James, i. 17; that we have no right nor title in ourselves to any esteem or praise, but that all the praise and glory belong to God alone — according to that, "to the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever," 1 Tim. i. 17; and again, "What hast thou that thou hast not received? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. In opposition to this, pride blinds a man to these truths, falsely persuading him that the qualifications and good things he possesses are his own, and therefore makes him attribute them to himself, value himself upon them, and seek to be esteemed, praised, and honoured on that account.

Such were those of whom the Scripture says, "Who have said, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own; who is lord over us?" Ps. xi. 5. Such was the pride of Pharaoh, who, when Moses first went to him and said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go that they may sacrifice to me in the desert," answered, "Who is the Lord, that I should hear His voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go," Exod. v. 1. Such was the pride of Nabuchodonosor, who, when the three holy children refused to worship his golden statue, threatened to throw them into the fiery furnace, and said, "And who is the God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Dan. iii. 15. Such was the pride of Lucifer, who, dazzled with his own beauty and high perfections, forgot that he had received them from God, and presumed to set himself upon an equality with the Most High, saying in his heart, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; . . . I will ascend above the height of the clouds. I will be like to the Most High," Isa. xiv. 13. Such, in fine, is the pride of all those who value themselves on their beauty, nobility, riches, valour, power, or strength, and who, forgetting God, act as if these things were their own property, and seek that praise and esteem on their account which are due to God alone.

(2.) Humility teaches us not only that all the goods we possess are from God, but also that they are bestowed on us of His pure goodness and liberality, without any right or title on our part; that we depend wholly upon the goodness of God, not only for having first bestowed them on us, but also for His continuing them; and that whatever endeavours we use to procure or preserve any good, we can never succeed without God's assistance and benediction,—nay, that so far from deserving any good

from God, of ourselves we deserve nothing but punishment on account of our sins.—See above, Chap. VIII., Q. 4. In consequence of these truths, humility teaches us to confide only in God, and not in ourselves, nor in any ability of our own; to attribute all success to God alone, and to give Him all the praise and glory.—See Chap. VIII., Q. 14. In opposition to this, even when by the light of revelation a man is forced to acknowledge God to be the author of all good, pride endeavours to persuade him that the success he acquires, or the good he enjoys, is due to his own merit, industry, prudence, study, labour, or power, and makes him on that account glory in himself, and seek esteem, approbation, and praise from others, instead of referring all to God, and giving glory to Him. Such was the pride of Nabuchodonosor, when, "walking in his palace of Babylon, he said, Is not this the great Babylon which I have built to be the seat of the kingdom by the strength of my power, and by the glory of my excellence?" Dan. iv. 27. Such is the pride of those who attribute their knowledge to their own genius and study, their riches to their industry and good management, their victories in war to their own courage and conduct, &c., glorying in themselves, and forgetting the Almighty.

(3.) Humility, by convincing a man of his own nothingness, incapacity, misery, and sin, teaches him carefully to separate what belongs to God from what is properly his own. Having made the separation, he is taught by humility to avoid ostentation of the good that is in him, lest he should be exposed to the danger of vanity, and rob God of that glory which is due only to Him. The more favours he receives from God, the more he humbles himself at the sight of his own unworthiness, lest he should abuse them, and looking to

the strict account he will have one day to render, for "of him to whom much is give much will be required." Thus St John Baptist, when the Pharisees sent to inquire of him if he were the Christ or a prophet, not only denied that he was the Christ, but even passed over in silence his being a prophet out of humility, though he could have acknowledged it with all truth, Christ Himself having declared him to be "a prophet, and more than a prophet;" and when they pressed him for an answer, all he would acknowledge of himself was, that he was a voice: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." In opposition to this, pride, having nothing in view but self-exaltation and the esteem of others, makes us conceive a much higher opinion of any good that is in us than it deserves, and even persuades us that we possess many good and valuable qualities which we do not. It also leads us to publish our pretended excellence to others, in order to inspire them with the same ideas. This, in one degree or other, is a common effect of pride, for there are few who have not a much better opinion of themselves and of their qualifications than they deserve, and who do not seek to show them in the best light to others.

(4.) Finally, humility, by fixing one's attention upon his own nothingness, and upon the gifts and graces with which Almighty God has been pleased to adorn others, leads him to place himself in his own heart below them, according to that of the apostle: "In humility let each esteem others better than themselves, each one not considering the things that are his own" (that is, the gifts of God that are in him), "but those that are other men's; for let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 3. And again: "In honour preferring one another," Rom. xii. 10; being "subject

one to another in the fear of Christ," Eph. v. 21. Or, as St Peter expresses it, "Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake," 1 Pet. ii. 13—that is, considering and respecting the gifts of God in them. Hence the truly humble man endeavours to shut his eyes to the failings and imperfections of others, finding enough in himself whereon to occupy his attention, and to humble him below all others. He considers the conduct of others in the most favourable light, carefully avoiding all rash judgments; and where the evil of their conduct is manifest, and can admit of no excuse, he reflects that if he had been in their situation, with the same temptations, he would perhaps have been worse than they, attributing it solely to the goodness of God that he is not the most sinful of the human race. In opposition to this, pride, fixing one's attention only on his imaginary good qualities, makes him blind to the good qualities of others, which he considers a diminution of his own; but makes him clear-sighted to detect their failings and imperfections, which his pride magnifies. Thus his vanity is gratified at seeing others inferior, as he imagines, to himself, and he exults in his own fancied superiority: hence rash judgments, unjust suspicions, jealousies, contempt, and disregard for others. Such was the pride of the Pharisee when he despised the humble publican who was more just than himself in the sight of God.

From this description of pride, it appears, (1.) That the very essence of this vice consists in withdrawing one's self in his own idea from subjection to God, from the essential dependence which he has upon Him, and in standing as if he had no need of God. "The beginning of the pride of man is to fall off from God, because his heart is departed from Him that made him," Ecclus. x.

14. (2.) That the direct and immediate tendency of it is to rob the Almighty of that glory which essentially belongs to Him, and of which He is so jealous that He declares, "I the Lord, this is My name, I will not give My glory to another," Isa. xlii. 8. And He repeats it again, chap. xlviii. 11. (3.) That as in every sin man commits he withdraws himself from his subjection to God on that point, and prefers his own will to the will of the Almighty, so pride enters into every sin, and constitutes an essential ingredient of its malice. Hence Pride is a universal sin, the parent and root of all sin, is directly opposed to God, and therefore most detestable in His eyes, and most dangerous to our souls. "Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind," says the venerable Tobias to his son, "or in thy words, for from it all perdition took its beginning," Tob. iv. 14. "Pride is hateful before God," Ecclus. x. 7. "Pride is the beginning of all sin; he that holdeth it shall be filled with maledictions, and it shall ruin him in the end," Ecclus. x. 15. "I hate arrogance and pride," says the Wisdom of God, "and every wicked way," Prov. viii. 13. "Six things there are," says Solomon, "which the Lord hateth, and the first of them are haughty eyes," Prov. vi. 16.

Q. 3. How does the great evil of pride appear from Scripture?

A. Besides what we have just seen, we find also the most dreadful judgments denounced against it in Scripture. (1.) "The soul that committeth anything through pride, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, because he hath been rebellious against the Lord, shall be cut off from amongst his people, for he hath contemned the word of the Lord," Num. xv. 30. (2.) "The Lord God hath sworn by His own soul," saith

the Lord, the God of Hosts, "I detest the pride of Jacob, and I hate his houses, and I will deliver up the city with the inhabitants thereof; and if there remain ten men in one house, they also shall die," Amos, vi. 8. "The Lord hath sworn against the pride of Jacob: surely I will never forget all their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein?" Amos, viii. 7. (3.) "Behold, I come against thee, O proud one, saith the Lord the God of Hosts; for the day is come, the time of thy visitation; and the proud one shall fall, he shall fall down, and there shall be none to lift him up; and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him," Jer. l. 31. (4.) "Behold, the day shall come, kindled as a furnace; and all the proud, and all they that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall set them on fire, saith the Lord of Hosts; it shall not leave them root nor branch," Mal. iv. 1.

(5.) "Pride goeth before destruction, and the spirit is lifted up before a fall; it is better to be humbled with the meek, than to divide the spoils with the proud," Prov. xv. 18. "The house that is very rich shall be brought to nothing by pride," Ecclus. xxi. 5. "The lofty eyes of man are humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be made to stoop, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Because the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and high-minded, and upon every one that is arrogant, and he shall be humbled," Isa. ii. 11. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled," as Christ Himself assures us, Luke, xiv. 11; for "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5. (6.) "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud," Prov. xv. 25. "The congregation of the proud shall not be healed, for the plant of wickedness

shall take root in them, and it shall not be perceived," Ecclus. iii. 30. "God hath overturned the thrones of proud princes, and hath set up the meek in their stead. God hath made the roots of proud nations to wither, and hath planted the humble of these nations. . . . God hath abolished the memory of the proud, and hath preserved the memory of them that are humble in mind," Ecclus. x. 17.

Q. 4. What are the sins that immediately arise from pride?

A. There are several sins immediately produced by pride which are called the daughters of pride. Properly speaking, they are only the various ways in which pride shows itself, according to circumstances. The principal sins of this kind are the following, and a view of the dreadful punishments which God has inflicted upon them will show still more fully the malice of this sin. To understand these various branches of pride, we must keep in view in what it precisely consists—namely, "in looking upon the good qualities we possess as our own, in esteeming and exalting ourselves on account of them, and in desiring that others should do the same."

(1.) This disposition of heart makes a man blind to his own faults, but acute and clear-sighted in seeing and magnifying those of others; hence he prefers himself to others, despises, judges, and condemns them rashly and unjustly. This was the case with the proud Pharisee in the parable which our Saviour expressly applies to all those "who trust in themselves as just, and despise others," Luke, xviii. 9. And it shows how detestable they are to God, and that their pride hinders them from obtaining pardon of their sins, and destroys all the merit of their good works.

(2.) It makes the proud take a vain complacency

in themselves, and in everything belonging to them; in their beauty, riches, family, children, and in their good works themselves, in thinking of them, and taking pleasure in them, resting in them as in the object of their happiness, instead of referring all to God, and placing their happiness in Him. This was the unhappy fault of David in numbering his people, in punishment of which God sent upon him pestilence, which, in three days' time, destroyed no less than seventy thousand of their number, thus punishing him in the very object of his sin.

(3.) It makes a man presume on his own parts and abilities, and trust in himself; it makes him ready to expose himself to dangerous occasions, depending upon himself and his own abilities. This was the case with St Peter when he said to his Master that "though all the rest should be scandalised at Him, he would not," which contained a plain acknowledgment of the opinion he had of himself above his brethren; and when our Saviour, to repress this vain idea, forewarned him of his being that night to deny Him, he replied with presumption, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." But when the trial came, how did he fall! Almighty God, in punishment of his pride, left him a little to himself, that he might learn by experience his own weakness. And this frequently is the way in which this branch of pride is punished.

(4.) It makes a man ambitious of raising himself in the world above the station in which Providence has placed him, in order to be more honoured and esteemed by others. This was the pride of our first parents: "You shall be as gods," said the serpent to Eve; and the desire of this induced her to commit the fatal crime

which brought upon us all our woe. And into how many crimes has the same unhappy ambition plunged her posterity, who, to raise themselves in the world, and obtain a name and power over others, stop at nothing which they think can forward their views! Calumny, intrigue, cabal, injustice, and perjury, are all the effects of this detestable branch of pride.

(5.) It makes a man attribute to himself and to his own address and abilities the success of his affairs and any good he may perform. Thus, Nabuchodonosor, "walking in his palace of Babylon, said, Is not this the great Babylon which I have built, to be the seat of the kingdom, by the strength of my power, and the glory of my excellence?" Dan. iv. 27. But see how this is punished by God! "And while the word was yet in the king's mouth, a voice came down from heaven—To thee, O king Nabuchodonosor, it is said, Thy kingdom shall pass from thee, and they shall cast thee out from among men, and thy dwelling shall be with cattle and wild beasts; thou shalt eat grass like an ox, and seven times shall pass over thee till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will. The same hour the word was fulfilled upon Nabuchodonosor, and he was driven away from among men, and did eat grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the due of heaven, till his hairs grew like the feathers of eagles, and his nails like birds' claws," Dan. iv. 28.

(6.) From the high esteem that proud people have of themselves, and its attendant, an ardent desire to be equally esteemed and praised by others, which is the vice of vanity or vainglory, it follows that, in order to procure this esteem and praise, they are always boasting of their own parts, take every occasion of speaking of

themselves, what they have done, what they can do, and what they are resolved to do, parading their own real or supposed qualifications. They are often so far blinded by their pride that they only expose themselves to contempt and derision, the Divine justice so punishing them in the very thing in which they sin. What greater folly than the boasts of Lucifer, as related by Isaiah (see above, Q. 2, No. 1.), and of the others there mentioned? But how were they confounded afterwards? and especially Lucifer, of whom the prophet adds, "But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit," Isa. xiv. 15. What can be more impious than the vain boasting of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, when he came with a great army against Jerusalem? Thus he speaks in his letter to king Ezechias, "Let not thy God deceive thee, in whom thou trustest, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hands of the king of the Assyrians. Behold, thou hast heard all that the kings of the Assyrians have done to all countries which they have destroyed; and canst thou be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them whom my fathers have destroyed?" &c., Is. xxxvii. 10. But in punishment of his pride, God sent His destroying angel, who in one night slew in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and eighty-five thousand. And when they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. And Sennacherib went out and departed, and returned and dwelt in Ninive; and it came to pass as he was worshipping in the temple of Nesroch his god, that Adramelech and Sarasor his sons slew him with the sword," verse 36.

(7.) As their heart is so set upon the esteem of others, they are open to all kinds of flattery, and they feel pleasure and complacency in being praised by others,

even though sensible in their own mind that they do not deserve it. How hateful this is to Almighty God, and how severely punished by Him, appears from the fate of king Herod Agrippa; for on receiving the Tyrian ambassadors at a public audience, "Upon a day appointed, Herod, being arrayed in kingly apparel, sat in the judgment-seat, and made an oration to them. And the people made acclamation, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man. And forthwith an angel of the Lord struck him, because he had not given the honour to God; and being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost," Acts, xii. 21.

(8.) If they see others preferred before them, or possessing qualifications for which they are more esteemed and honoured than themselves, their hearts are filled with envy and bitterness, which often hurry them to the greatest crimes. In this they imitate the pride and malice of Satan, and show how much they belong to him; for "by the envy of the devil death came into the world, and they follow him that are of his side," Wis. ii. 24. By this invidious pride, Cain was led to the murder of his brother, and became a reprobate; and from the same source arose Saul's hatred against David, whom he persecuted, and on whose account he killed eighty-five innocent priests of God in cold blood, merely because he suspected that the chief priest had favoured David.

(9.) If they commit any fault, they cannot bear to be reproved even by their lawful superiors, but either have recourse to vain excuses and lies, or defend the evil they have done, and become obstinate in their sin. In this they imitate the pride of our first parents, who, by pretending to excuse their fall, seemed even to cast the blame on God Himself, and rather increased their guilt than moved

Him to mercy. They imitate also the pride of Corah and his companions, who, becoming obstinate in their fault, were swallowed up alive, the earth opening under their feet: "And they went down alive into hell, the ground closing upon them, and they perished from among the people," Num. xvi. 33.

(10.) If contradicted in their views, neglected, or if any kind of disrespect be shown them, though in appearance only, they immediately lose patience, are inflamed with passion against the offenders, and breathe nothing but vengeance. In this they imitate the unhappy Haman, in his rage against Mordecai and the nation of the Jews; but sooner or later the vengeance of God turns their malice upon their own heads, and pursues them, as it did Haman, with the same evils, or worse than those which they intended or inflicted upon others.

(11.) Attributing to themselves any good that is in them, they forget the hand from which they receive it, are ungrateful to God, and neglect to thank Him. By this means they draw upon themselves the dreadful punishments with which the Divine justice pursues pride. They are left to themselves, and given up at last to a reprobate sense. Thus we are told that the heathen philosophers, "When they knew God, have not glorified Him as God, or given thanks, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened; . . . wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, to uncleanness; . . . for this cause God delivered them up to shameful affections, . . . and as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense," Rom. i. 21.

(12.) Hypocrisy, by which a person puts on an outward appearance of sanctity and piety in order to attract

the esteem and praise of men, is another child of the same unhappy parent, Pride. This was the great vice of the Pharisees, for which our blessed Saviour pronounces so many woes against them in the Gospel. From this also proceed obstinacy in one's own opinion, and the spirit of contradiction and disputing, the vain man wishing to appear better informed than others, even at the expense of the truth.

Q. 5. Is pride, then, a pernicious evil to man?

A. It is of all vices the most pernicious, as appears from all we have seen above, and also because, (1.) Wherever it enters, even in our most virtuous actions, it destroys their value and worth in the sight of God; for as the body without the soul is dead, so wherever pride enters into any virtuous action, it destroys its life in the eyes of God. This our blessed Saviour declares in plain terms when He assures us that if we fast or pray, or give alms to be seen by men—that is, to gain their esteem and praise—we need expect no reward from our heavenly Father. (2.) It has this dangerous property above all other vices, that it draws nourishment not only from things that are indifferent in themselves, but even from our very virtues, even from humility, the virtue which is most opposed to it. There is no other vice to which our nature is subject that has not some contrary virtue by which it is totally subdued. Thus lust is subdued by chastity, anger by meekness, avarice by liberality, envy by charity, sloth by devotion—and the perfect practice of these virtues effectually destroys their opposite vices; but that branch of pride which seeks the praise and esteem of men, and is called vainglory, has no contrary virtue by which it can be securely overcome, since it takes occasion to nourish itself from our virtues, and even from our very humiliations themselves; and the reason is, be-

cause every other vice has something evil for its object, but pride and vainglory rise chiefly from objects that are good. Hence all other vices are the vices of sinners, but vainglory is the vice even of the good. Other vices domineer only in those who are overcome by them, but vainglory rises up against its very conquerors, and draws new strength to assault them from these very acts of virtue and humiliation which they perform in order to conquer it. Hence it is the first vice which generally attacks a person who applies himself to a virtuous life, and it is the last that leaves him. (3.) It not only arises from our virtuous actions, but even from things the most indifferent or trifling, even from our vices themselves: thus some are vain of their beauty, some of their dress, some of their knowledge, some of their riches, some, as St Francis of Sales justly observes, think more of themselves, and imagine that others admire them more, when on horseback than on foot. Finally, some glory even in their wickedness, and boast of their vices, of their drunkenness and debaucheries, seeking praise and a name from those things of which they ought to be ashamed. Of such the Scripture says, "They are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in most wicked things," Prov. ii. 14. And St Paul thus pathetically describes and declares them, "Many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now weeping tell you), that are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame," Philip. iii. 18. Such is the subtle poison of this unhappy vice, and such the immense injury it does to the soul of man!

Q. 6. What are the remedies against pride?

A. (1.) The first and most necessary remedy against pride is fervent, humble, and persevering prayer; but even from this pride will take an occasion to nourish

itself, if the soul be not exceedingly upon its guard, which clearly shows that nothing but the Almighty hand of God can root out this unhappy vice from the soul. (2.) Often to meditate upon the great evil of pride, and how opposed it is to the Spirit and example of Jesus Christ, in order to excite in the soul an earnest desire of being delivered from it. (3.) Often to meditate upon the grounds of humility, our own nothingness, weakness, misery, and unworthiness, that we may fly to God with greater confidence, as to the One Who alone can cure us. (4.) To force ourselves frequently, or rather continually, to make interior acts of that humility which we have described above. (5.) To accustom ourselves in everything to protest against all self-sufficiency and self-complacency, and to do everything with the express intention of seeking only to please God, and to obey His holy will. (6.) To embrace with readiness every opportunity of practising humility, and to bear in silence, in patience and resignation, any humiliation which God in His goodness may be pleased to send us. (7.) Often to meditate on the necessity of true humility, in order to be saved.

Section II.

Humility.

Q. 7. What is humility?

A. It is a virtue which resides partly in the understanding and partly in the will, partly in the spirit and partly in the heart. In the understanding and spirit it convinces a man that of himself he is nothing, has nothing, can do no good, and deserves nothing but punishment on account of his sins.—The grounds of which conviction see above, Chap. VIII., Q. 4, 14, No. 1. In the heart and will it makes a man contemn and despise himself, as having nothing of himself but misery and sin, and hence he is not only willing but desirous of being despised by others, and of suffering humiliations as his due; of flying the praise and esteem of the world, to which he has no title; of giving the glory of everything to God, to Whom alone it belongs; and of confiding wholly in Him.—See above, Q. 2 of this chapter, for the true character of this virtue.

Q. 8. Is humility necessary for salvation?

A. No virtue is more necessary for obtaining salvation than humility; for (1.) Pride drove the fallen angels out of heaven. If therefore the proud who were in heaven could not be permitted to remain, much less can those who are not humble be admitted. (2.) Without the grace of God we cannot take one step towards our salvation. Now "God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble," James, iv. 6. "To whom shall I have respect," says Almighty God, "but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My

words?" Is. lxvi. 2. "The greater thou art, the more humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God," Ecclus. iii. 20.—See above, Chap. VIII., Q. 6. (3.) Without true humility there can be no Christian hope, and without hope we cannot be saved.—See Chap. VIII. (4.) Without humility there can be no true repentance, and consequently no pardon of our sins—witness the proud Pharisee: but a humble and contrite heart God will not despise, Ps. l. 19. (5.) All that we have seen above of the evil of pride, and the abhorrence which God has of it, and the rigour with which He pursues, are convincing proofs of the necessity of humility.

(6.) All Christians are convinced of the necessity of baptism and repentance for salvation; and this conviction is founded on these express and formal declarations of the Son of God: "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," John, iii. 5. And again, "I say unto you, Except you be penitent, you shall all likewise perish," Luke, xiii. 5. These expressions contain the most unequivocal declaration of the necessity of these two means of salvation. Now the same Son of God uses the same mode of expression to show the necessity of humility; for when the disciples asked Him, saying, "Who thinkest thou is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus, calling to Him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said, Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Mat. xviii. 1.

Q. 9. What are the motives to the practice of humility?

A. There are several motives to the practice of this virtue, the strongest of which is its absolute necessity in order to be saved; but besides, there are the following:—

I. The excellence of it; for it is one of the greatest and most excellent of all virtues, as appears from these reasons: (1.) It is the most difficult to our nature, being contrary to that unhappy pride which is the deepest wound our nature has received from sin; consequently it is the more glorious in the sight of God when we effectually overcome that difficulty for His sake, and in order to render Him that true homage of praise and glory which belongs only to Him. (2.) True humility can never arise from any interest of self-love, it being directly opposed to all its views; it can therefore arise only from the pure and sincere love of God, and nothing else can support the soul in the difficult task of acquiring it. Now the more difficult any virtue is to self-love, and the more pure and holy the motive from which it arises, the more excellent it is in itself, and the more valuable in the eyes of God. (3.) It is the groundwork and foundation of all other virtues, insomuch that without humility no virtue whatever can be of any value before God; it cannot be more than a shadow without the substance—for wherever pride enters into any of our virtuous actions, it corrupts and destroys their whole merit. And hence the more one advances in humility, the more he advances in real virtue, and no further. (4.) It is that virtue from which prayer draws its wonderful power and efficacy in obtaining from God whatever we ask, as we have seen above, Chap X., sec. 1. (5.) It disarms the anger and indignation of God, provoked by our sins, and moves Him to mercy. Witness the wicked king Achab; for though Almighty God had sent His prophet Elias to denounce to him the dreadful judgments that He was to

send upon him for his crimes, yet when Achab humbled himself, God called upon Elias, and said, "Hast thou seen Achab humbled before Me? therefore, because he hath humbled himself for My sake, I will not bring the evil in his days," 3 Kings, xxi. 29. (6.) It is the root from which all Christian virtue springs, and by means of which it is nourished and increased,—as the plant or tree springs from its root, and draws its nourishment from it. And as the root, though the principle of life and of all the virtues of the plant, has no beauty, but is concealed in the earth and trampled upon by men;—so humility hides itself from the sight of others, is despised and trampled upon by the world, and has no beauty nor appearance to recommend it to their esteem. Yet it is the principal source from which all other Christian virtues draw their highest merit and excellence in the eyes of God. And as the deeper the root is in the ground, the higher the tree grows, so the more profound humility is, the more exalted are the virtues which spring from it.

II. Another powerful motive for this virtue is the example of Jesus Christ; for He came from heaven to teach us humility by His example, as well as by His doctrine. Thus He says, "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls," Mat. xi. 29. And when James and John asked, by their mother's interposition, to sit, one on His right hand, and the other on His left, in His kingdom, the other apostles "hearing it, were moved with indignation against the two brothers;" but Jesus called them to Him, and said, "You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that are greater exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be the greater among you, let

him be your minister; and he that will be first among you shall be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," Mat. xx. 24. And when on another occasion "there was a strife among them, which of them should seem to be greater, He said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, . . . but you not so, but he that is greater among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is the leader as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth," Luke, xxii. 24. In a still more striking manner He inculcates the practice of humility from His own example, when at the Last Supper "He riseth from supper and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, He girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. And after He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, being set down again, He said to them, Know ye what I have done to you? You call Me Master and Lord; and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also." John, xii. 4, 12. Now unless we resemble Jesus Christ, we can have no part with Him, for "whom God foreknew He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son," Rom. viii. 29; that is, God Almighty has decreed that all such as He foreknew would by perseverance in faith and good works be saved, should arrive at that happiness only by being conformable to the image of Jesus Christ.

Q. 10. In what manner did our Saviour exercise this holy virtue?

A. By practising the most excellent and heroic acts of it on all occasions, as recorded in the Gospel for our instruction. Thus, (1.) He made choice for His portion of those things which were mean and low in the eyes of the world. Before He was born He would be rejected by all the Jews of Bethlehem, and in consequence was born in a stable, and laid in a manger, in the poor destitute condition to which His virgin mother and St Joseph were reduced. He lived for the greater part of His life in a lowly station, unknown to the world, and labouring at a humble employment, and in His public life made choice of twelve poor fishermen for His intimate friends and companions. He then practised such rigorous poverty as to be maintained by charity, and could say of Himself, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head," Mat. viii. 20. (2.) He was modest and meek in His whole behaviour, was never seen to contend, but always showed such gentle mildness as to verify what was foretold of Him by the prophet, "He shall not contend nor cry out, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets; the bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not extinguish," Mat. xii. 19. (3.) He was always ready to do the lowliest offices of charity to help and serve any one. In this His whole private life was spent, serving His blessed mother and St Joseph in their humble station; and He afterwards declared that He was come not to be served Himself, but to serve others—"not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And with this view He washed His disciples' feet, as we have seen above. (4.) He never sought His own glory or the

praise of men, but did all His glorious works with the most pure intention for the glory of His heavenly Father: "I seek not my own glory," "I honour My Father. . . . If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing," John, viii. 49, 54. (5.) He sometimes sought to conceal His miracles, to teach us how much we ought to avoid seeking the praise of men for any good we do. Thus, when He raised Jairus's daughter from death to life, "He charged them strictly that no one should know it," Mark, v. 43. When He cured the leper He said to Him, "See thou tell no man," Mat. viii. 4. When He cured two blind men, He "strictly charged them, saying, See that no man know this," Mat. ix. 30. And after His glorious transfiguration before His three disciples, "As they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of man be risen from the dead," Mat. xvii. 9. Not that He Himself was in any danger of vainglory had these things been known, but He did it for our instruction. (6.) When honours were offered Him, He fled from them; for after the miraculous feeding of five thousand men with five loaves and two small fishes, "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come to take Him by force, and make Him king, He fled again into the mountain Himself alone," John, vi. 15. (7.) When He was pleased, on His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, to receive the loudest acclamations and honours from the people, He was so far from being elated by them, that in the midst of this triumph He wept over Jerusalem, foreseeing her reprobation, and the dreadful miseries that were soon to come upon her. (8.) He suffered the most unparalleled injuries and insults during the course of His passion without complaint or murmur, and without uttering a word either to

defend His injured honour or to free Himself from such insults, "Who, when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not," 1 Pet. ii. 23, "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps," ver. 21. (9.) Above all, He showed His profound humility of heart and love of abjection in His perfect obedience, not only to His blessed mother and St Joseph, as we read that "He went down to Nazareth, and was subject to them," but even to His enemies, when He delivered Himself up to their hands, of which the Scripture says, "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the *ignominious* death of the cross," Phil. ii. 8. These are the admirable lessons of humility which Jesus Christ the Son of God gives us in His own person, and which all His followers ought carefully to imitate in order to acquire and practise this Divine virtue.

Q. 11. What other practices of humility are particularly recommended in Scripture?

A. Chiefly these: (1.) Never to say anything to our own praise, or in order to gain the esteem of others. "Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind nor in thy words; for from it all perdition took its beginning," Tob. iv. 14. If it appears in words, it is a sure sign that it reigns in the heart; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and therefore "boast not for to-morrow, for thou knowest not what the day to come may bring forth. Let another praise thee, and not thy own mouth; a stranger, and not thy own lips," Prov. xxvii. 1. (2.) To rejoice in our own abjection—that is, to be pleased and contented when anything happens which may tend to give others a humble opinion of us, when our natural infirmities, whether of mind or body, are made known, or when

any humiliation comes upon us. The apostles, when scourged, went away "rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus," Acts, v. 41. "Gladly," says St Paul, "will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I take pleasure in my infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake," 2 Cor. xii. 9. (3.) Readily to yield to the judgment of others where the honour of God and religion is not concerned, never to be obstinate in defending our own opinion, and to avoid all contentions and debates. "Be not wise in your own conceits," Rom. xii. 16. "Avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they beget strifes," 2 Tim. ii. 23. "Let nothing be done through strife, nor by vainglory; but in humility, let each esteem others better than themselves," Phil. ii. 3. And even where the cause of God and of truth is in question, though we must never betray that sacred cause by a base compliance, we must avoid wrangling and bitterness; and declare the truth, "the ground of the hope that is in us," with humility and sincerity, leaving the result in the hand of God; for "the servant of God must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men, apt to teach, patient, with modesty admonishing them that resist the truth; if peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth," 2 Tim. ii. 24. Other exercises of humility may be learned from what we have seen above, Q. 4, on the different branches of pride; for to avoid all those, and act in opposition to them, is to practise the most perfect humility.

Section III.

Spiritual Sloth.

Q. 12. What is spiritual sloth?

A. Sloth is a mean and contemptible vice; but the greatness of its malice does not appear at first sight. It is, however, justly considered a mortal sin, because our blessed Saviour with His own mouth condemns the slothful and unprofitable servant to be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness,—"there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxv. 30. It is also one of the capital sins, on account of the many other sins that arise from it. Spiritual sloth is a feebleness and languor of the soul which gives a distaste and aversion for the exercises of virtue and piety, on account of the pain and difficulty one finds in practising them. On this we must observe, (1.) That there are two different classes of spiritual exercises—some are strictly commanded, and necessary for salvation; others are not absolutely necessary, but profitable to the soul, and great helps to salvation. (2.) These last are not enjoined to all by a general command, and therefore are not absolutely necessary for salvation, yet they may in particular circumstances be, to some, necessary precautions and means for enabling them to fulfil their other duties of strict obligation. (3.) Spiritual sloth which gives one such a distaste for duties of obligation, and makes him neglect the performance of them, is then a mortal sin, whether these duties be necessary for salvation of themselves, or only such with regard to the particular circumstances of the person concerned. (4.) Spiritual sloth,

which makes a person have an aversion for and neglect such exercises of virtue as are not absolutely necessary, but very conducive to salvation, is a dangerous disposition, and constitutes a great part of the state of tepidity, which is acknowledged by all to be most pernicious to the soul. (5.) It must, however, be observed that the difficulty which one feels in the exercises of virtue and piety is not of itself the vice of spiritual sloth, even though the will be somewhat discouraged, provided she does not neglect these duties when obliged to perform them. This is the revolt of the flesh against the Spirit, which the greatest saints have experienced; and if the person humbles himself before God, and perseveres in doing his duty, instead of being injurious it will be of advantage to him. But if a person yields to this repugnance, and becomes negligent, he is then more or less culpable, in proportion to the degree of his neglect; and if he omits his duties entirely, then the sin of spiritual sloth is completed.

Q. 13. Wherein consists the malice of spiritual sloth?

A. Its principal malice consists in this, that it destroys the principle of spiritual life in the soul. This principle is charity, or the love of God, to which sloth is directly opposed. Charity makes a person take pleasure in the service of God, and renders the difficulties of a virtuous life easy and agreeable; sloth makes everything in the service of God appear painful and burdensome, causing a distaste and aversion for it: charity makes us embrace with gladness every occasion of pleasing God and giving testimony of our love for Him. Sloth produces an aversion to everything disagreeable or painful to self-love, and prefers ease and convenience to giving God those testimonies of our love which He requires. Charity cannot exist in a soul without some

degree of zeal for the glory of God and one's own sanctification; sloth begets a coldness and insensibility in the soul towards God and eternal happiness, which are incompatible with that zeal which the love of God inspires. Hence, this spiritual sloth is an enemy to virtue and piety, by the aversion it excites in the soul against them; it is an enemy of our salvation which our Saviour expressly declares essentially requires that we do violence to ourselves; for "the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent carry it away;" it is an enemy to the cross of Christ and to His Gospel, whose sacred maxims inculcate self-denial, mortification, and penance.

Q. 14. What description does the Scriptures give us of this vice?

A. The Scriptures give us a strong and affecting description of the slothful man in his temporal affairs, and the fatal consequences which his sloth occasions in them, which in the spiritual sense are all literally verified in what concerns the soul. Thus, "The soul of the sluggard willeth and willeth not, but the soul of them that work shall be made fat," Prov. xiii. 4. "Desires kill the slothful, for his hands refused to work at all. He longeth and desireth all the day," Prov. xxi. 25. "As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed. The slothful hideth his hand under his arm-pit, and it grieveth him to turn it to his mouth," Prov. xxvi. 14. See here the behaviour of the spiritually slothful man; he is full of desires, but he has no resolution to take any step to accomplish them; he has a will to be saved, but it is a weak, inconstant, irresolute will, which never can be the means of salvation. He dreads the labour, he apprehends a thousand difficulties which have no existence but in his own imagination.

This delusion the Scriptures thus describe, with its fatal consequences: "Because of the cold the sluggard would not plough, he shall beg therefore in the summer, and it shall not be given him," Prov. xx. 4. "Fear casteth down the slothful, and the souls of the effeminate shall be hungry," Prov. xviii. 8. The slothful man saith, "There is a lion in the way; I shall be slain in the midst of the streets," Prov. xxii. 13. "The way of the slothful is a hedge of thorns; the way of the just is without offence," Prov. xv. 19. "I passed by the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the foolish man, and behold it was all filled up with nettles, and thorns had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down; which when I had seen, I laid it up in my heart, and by the example I received instruction. Thou wilt sleep a little, said I, thou wilt slumber a little, thou wilt fold thy hands a little to rest; and poverty shall come upon thee as a runner, and beggary as an armed man," Prov. xxiv. 30.

Q. 15. Who are those that are guilty of spiritual sloth?

A. To understand this, we must keep before our eyes the following Gospel truths: (1.) We are in this world only to work out our salvation; this is the great end of our being; this is our proper business,—this is the one thing necessary, without which all things else are to no purpose, as we have seen, Chap. V. Sect. 3. (2.) To secure our salvation is a work of difficulty, and requires constant labour and industry on our part.—See Chap. V. Sect. 4. It is not enough to obtain salvation that we avoid evil; we must also do good, discharge the duties which God requires of us, and overcome the enemies that are opposed to it. Hence we are commanded "with fear and trembling to work out

our salvation," Phil. ii. 12; and "to labour the more that by good works we may make our calling and election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10; and it is upon these terms that "an entrance shall be ministered to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 11. (3.) Our time is given us only to be employed in such good works, according to our state and condition in the world, as may effectually secure this end of our being; and therefore to this great end, and to no other, are we commanded to employ it. "Yet a little while," says Jesus Christ, "the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not," John, xii. 35. "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work," John, ix. 4. "We do exhort you," says St Paul, "that you receive not the grace of God in vain. . . . Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 1. "See, therefore, brethren, that you walk circumspectly, not as the unwise, but as the wise, redeeming the time, for the days are evil," Eph. v. 15. And "in doing good let us not fail, for in due time we shall reap, not failing; therefore, whilst we have time, let us do good to all men," Gal. vi. 9; and "exhort one another every day, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," Heb. iii. 13.

(4.) To enable us to perform this great work, the salvation of our souls, Almighty God has given to every one a portion of His goods and graces; "to one He gives five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every one according to his proper ability," Mat. xxv. 15—that is, to every one He gives such a portion of His graces as He sees proper. These are the goods of grace and nature, of mind and body, of person and fortune:

health, knowledge, riches, friends, &c., as well as the spiritual graces which Jesus Christ obtained for us by His passion and death, and they are all given as means to work out our salvation. Moreover, we must give a most strict account of the use we make of these talents; and the more we have received, the greater good fruit will be expected from us. If we prove unprofitable and slothful, Christ Himself declares that eternal misery shall be our doom: "And the unprofitable servant who had not abused his talent, but only neglected to improve it, cast ye," says Christ, "into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxv. 30.

The same most important truth is set before us in the parable of the barren fig-tree: "And Jesus was hungry; and when He had seen afar off a fig-tree having leaves, He came, if perhaps He might find anything on it; and when He was come to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the time for figs. And answering, He said, May no man hereafter eat fruit of thee any more for ever! And His disciples heard it; . . . and when they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to him, Rabbi, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away," Mark, xi. 12, 20. Observe the dreadful fate of those who do not bring forth good fruit from those graces which God bestows, and who shall be found devoid of good works when God calls upon them to give an account! It is true, the goodness of God bears with such for a time; and though justice demands their immediate punishment, yet mercy often interposes for a respite; but if they still continue to be fruitless and unprofitable, at last they will feel the weight of Divine vengeance in the flames of hell. This

our Saviour expresses in the parable of the barren tree: "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and he found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore; why cumbereth it the ground? But he answering said to him, Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if haply it bear fruit; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down," Luke, xiii. 6. (5.) But if the very neglect to improve the talents which God gives us be so severely punished by His justice, if the being only unprofitable servants brings upon us so great a guilt before Him, what will be the fate of those who abuse, squander, or turn his talents into instruments of offending Him? Hear what our Saviour Himself says: First, He assures us that the unjust steward who wasted his master's goods was called to account, and put out of his stewardship, Luke, xvi. 1. Then He says in another place, "If the servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth to come, and shall begin to strike the men-servants and maid-servants, and to eat and drink, and be drunk; the lord of that servant will come in the day that he looketh not for him, and at the hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him, and shall appoint him his portion with unbelievers," Luke, xii. 45. "And with the hypocrites there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxiv. 51. "And that servant who knew the will of his lord, and prepared not himself, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, . . . and unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand more," Luke, xii. 47.

From these Scripture truths it is easy to discover who are the slaves of spiritual sloth: (1.) Those who lead an idle and unprofitable life without applying their talents of nature, fortune, or grace to any good purpose; for though a life of this kind may seem blameless in the sight of men, it is certainly far from being innocent in the eyes of God. Such an idle, unprofitable life is contrary to the very end of our being; for we are all born to labour and toil, not to be idle; we are condemned to labour by God Himself, in punishment of sin —"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," Gen. iii. 19. And though a person be free from the necessity of bodily toil for procuring bread, yet he is not thereby exempted from the general law, "Man is born to labour," Job, v. 7; and ought, therefore, to be the more diligent in applying his talents to promote the glory of God and his own salvation. To those, in a particular manner, may be applied the command of our Saviour, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life," John, vi. 27. And St Paul reprobates a life of idleness in these strong terms: "We entreat you, brethren, that you use your endeavour to be quiet, and that you do your own business, and work with your own hands, as we command you," 1 Thess. iv. 11. "For also when we were with you we declared this to you, that if any man will not work, neither let him eat. For we have heard that there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling. Now we charge them that are such, and beseech them by the Lord Jesus Christ, that, working with silence, they would eat their own bread. But you, brethren, be not weary in well-doing," 2 Thess. iii. 10. And idleness, besides being in itself so sinful, is also the

origin of many other crimes, especially in those who have the means of gratifying their passions; for the Scriptures declare, "idleness hath taught much evil," Ecclus. xxxiii. 29. For, "being idle, they learn to go about from house to house; not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not," 1 Tim. v. 13; and therefore, "He that pursueth idleness is a very fool," Prov. xii. 11.

(2.) If those are so criminal in the eyes of God who do not improve their talents, in what light must those appear before Him who abuse them? whose life is spent in pursuit of worldly vanities? who abuse the gifts intended for their salvation, and use them as means to gratify their passions? who think of no happiness but what is found in indulging their self-love? whose precious time is spent in dissipation, dressing, gaming, gallantry, and still more criminal pursuits? who are wedded to these unhappy pleasures, have an aversion to every spiritual duty, which they either entirely neglect, or perform only by constraint, and to preserve appearances? How directly opposed is such conduct to all the above sacred and Divine truths. And yet how common is it in the world! When called before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, what account will such persons be able to give of their time, their money, their knowledge, their health, their power and authority in the world, and of all the other advantages which God has bestowed upon them? Compare their conduct with the above truths, and the answer will easily appear.

(3.) Those also are guilty of spiritual sloth who live in the state of tepidity or lukewarmness in the service of God. The lukewarm Christian is, indeed, a Christian in appearance, and endeavours to avoid what he knows to be a mortal crime. To the world he seems

even edifying and regular in his general conduct; but he aims at nothing more, and flatters himself that he will persevere and die in the grace of God, and so escape His avenging justice. He thinks of nothing more. To restrain himself in lesser matters is to him painful; to deny his own will is a restraint he will not submit to; such exercises of piety as are not of strict obligation he despises; he makes light of venial sins, and commits them without remorse; he indulges his self-love in everything when he imagines there is no mortal guilt; his mind is full of worldly ideas, his heart wedded to worldly objects. Christian duties of strict obligation he performs as to the exterior act, but without spirit, without fervour, in a cold indifferent manner. He sometimes feels remorse of conscience, and is moved by the inspirations of God to aim at greater devotion; but difficulties deter him, his courage fails, and he immediately falls back into his habitual tepidity. He dares not aspire to the perfection of virtue, but contents himself with a kind of goodwill towards it; he lives without vigilance over himself; has an aversion to looking into his own interior; he makes light of such failings as he thinks trivial, and any good work he does is performed with negligence, and accompanied with a thousand imperfections, which exceedingly diminish, if they do not entirely destroy, all the merit and value of it. Now for a soul there is perhaps no more dangerous state than this. The Scripture says, "Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently," Jer. xlviii. 10. And our Lord Himself speaks to all such as follows: "Thus saith the faithful and true Witness, . . . I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot; but because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of My

mouth; because thou sayest I am rich and made wealthy, and have need of nothing; and thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold, fire-tried, that thou mayest be made rich; and mayest be clothed in white garments, and the shame of thy nakedness may not appear: and anoint thy eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see," Rev. iii. 14. In what striking colours do these words show the guilt and danger of tepidity! Those who are in it offend Almighty God by their carelessness; they cool His love and affection for them; their exterior good works become loathsome to Him from the many imperfections mixed with them; they provoke Him to withdraw His more abundant graces; their self-love, by frequent indulgence, becomes stronger; their repeated transgressions of the law in smaller matters render sin familiar to them; they easily persuade themselves that things which are unpleasant are of little consequence; they grasp at the most frivolous pretext to dispense themselves from them; and thus, deluded by a false conscience, they fall into greater sins, flattering themselves that they are only venial; and because they perform some good works, they imagine themselves rich and wealthy, while in the eyes of God they are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked! —See *Sincere Christian*, Chap. XVI. Sec. 2. On venial sin.

Section IV.

Spiritual Fervour.

Q. 16. What is understood by spiritual fervour?

A. We have seen above, Chap. XIII. Sec. 3, that we may love ourselves with two different kinds of love —namely, the love of charity and self-love; and that these are directly contrary to each other. The love of charity teaches us to love ourselves for God's sake, and to seek our happiness only in God; self-love teaches us to love ourselves for ourselves alone, and to seek our happiness in gratifying our own desires and natural inclinations. Charity teaches us "to use this world as if we used it not"—that is, to consider the things of this life only as means to support us in our pilgrimage, and to enable us to perform those duties which God requires from us in order to be saved; and in consequence of this, to use them only as means, without desiring more of them than is necessary for the end proposed, or setting our hearts upon them further than as helps to our weakness in pursuing the great object of our desire, eternal salvation. Self-love impels us to consider the goods of this world as desirable in themselves, and as objects of happiness; to seek them with ardour, and to rest in the enjoyment of them as our chief good. These then being so opposed to each other, it is manifest that the more one yields to the suggestion of self-love, the more the love of charity must be extinguished in his heart; the more he sets his heart on the pleasures of sense, the more distaste he will have for those of the Spirit; the more his mind is occupied by worldly objects, the more insensible he must be-

come to those that regard the soul. For here we see in a particular manner what our Saviour says, that "No man can serve two masters, . . . you cannot serve God and mammon," Mat. vi. 24. Hence it is plain that spiritual sloth is nothing but the natural consequence of the dominion of self-love, by which the holy love of charity is extinguished, and a distaste and loathing are produced in the heart towards all those sacred duties which charity prescribes. On the other hand, fervour, the virtue opposed to spiritual sloth, is the love of charity triumphing in the soul over self-love, and makes a man zealous and fervent in the service of God and in the care of his soul, and diligent in performing all those duties which the law of God requires from him.

Q. 17. What are the motives which ought to excite us to this spiritual fervour?

A. All the powerful motives which oblige us to a perfect obedience to the law of God engage us equally to spiritual fervour, which is a diligent care to obey the commandments of God, and to please Him. These motives are, His supreme dominion over us—His infinite love—our happiness in this present life—our eternal happiness in the life to come—the vast importance of salvation—and the dreadful consequences of losing our souls. All these truths convince us that in the service of God we can never do anything equal to what we owe Him; that we can never do, for securing our salvation, more than it deserves; and, consequently, that it is the height of folly to be negligent in an affair of such importance. But our misfortune is, that we do not meditate as we ought on these great truths. Blinded by the objects which surround us and flatter our senses, we are carried away by their delusions; and occupied with a thou-

sand trifles, unprofitable cares, or vain amusements, we cannot find time, or rather we will not allow ourselves time, to think on the solid truths of eternity. Our esteem of eternal goods becomes weaker and weaker, and we think only of the present time. This is the source of all our woes, and of the numberless crimes that like a deluge overflow the world. "They have destroyed My vineyard," says God by the prophet Jeremiah; "they have trodden My portion under foot; they have changed My delightful portion into a wilderness; they have laid it waste, and it hath mourned for Me. With desolation is all the land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in the heart," Jer. xii. 10. "The harp, and the lyre, and the timbrel, and the pipe and wine, are in your feasts; and the work of the Lord you regard not, nor do you consider the works of His hands. Therefore hath hell enlarged her soul, and opened her mouth without any bounds, and their strong ones, and their people, and their high and glorious ones shall go down into it," Isa. v. 12.

CONCLUSION.

WE cannot conclude this most important subject in a more appropriate manner than by earnestly entreating our pious readers frequently and seriously to reflect on their latter end, and on the immense difference, when time shall be no more, between the fate of those who, with fervour of spirit, keep the commandments of God, and of those who, deluded by their self-love, spend their

precious time in utter forgetfulness of God and of eternity. Nor can we set before their eyes a more affecting description of this difference than that which the Holy Ghost Himself has given to us by the mouth of the wise man: "The souls of the just," says he, "are in the hands of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die; and their departure was taken for misery; and their going away from us for utter destruction: but they are in peace. And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality. Afflicted in a few things, in many they shall be well rewarded; because God hath tried them, and found them worthy of Himself. As gold in the furnace He hath proved them, and as a victim of a holocaust He hath received them, and in time there shall be respect had to them. The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among reeds. They shall judge nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever. They that trust in Him shall understand the truth; and they that are faithful in love shall rest in Him; for grace and peace is to His elect. But the wicked shall be punished according to their own devices, who have neglected the just, and have revolted from the Lord. For he that rejecteth wisdom and discipline is unhappy; and their hope is vain, and their labour without fruit, and their works unprofitable," Wis. iii. 1.

"The just man, if he be prevented with death, shall be in rest. For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years; but the understanding of a man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age. He pleased God, and was beloved, and living among sinners, he was translated. He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit

beguile his soul. For the bewitching of vanity obscureth good things, and the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind. Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time, for his soul pleased God; therefore He hastened to bring him out of the midst of his iniquities; but the people see this and understand not, nor lay such things in their hearts; that the grace of God and His mercy is with the saints, and that He hath respect to His chosen. But the just that is dead condemneth the wicked that are living; and youth soon ended, the long life of the unjust. For they shall see the end of the wise man, and shall not understand what God hath designed for him, and why the Lord hath set him in safety. They shall see him and shall despise him; but the Lord shall laugh them to scorn; and they shall fall after this without honour, and be a reproach among the dead for ever; for he shall burst them puffed up and speechless, and shall shake them from the foundations; and they shall be utterly laid waste: they shall be in sorrow, and their memory shall perish. They shall come with fear (to the judgment-seat of God) at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them. Then shall the just stand with great confidence against those that have afflicted them, and taken away their labours. These seeing it, shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation; shrinking within themselves, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit. These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We, fools, esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints. Therefore we have erred from the

way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined unto us, and the sun of understanding hath not risen upon us. We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow, and like a post that runneth on, and as a ship that passeth through the waves; whereof, when it is gone by, the trace cannot be found, nor the path of its keel in the waters; or as when a bird flieth through the air, of the passage of which no mark can be found, but only the sound of the wings beating the light air, and parting it by the force of her flight; she moveth her wings and hath flown through, and there is no mark found afterwards of her way: or as when an arrow is shot at a mark, the divided air cometh presently together again, so that the passage thereof is not known; so we also being born, forthwith cease to be, and have been able to show no mark of virtue, but are consumed in our wickedness. Such things as these (the sinners said in hell) . . . for the hope of the wicked is as dust, which is blown away with the wind, and as a thin froth, which is dispersed by the storm, and as smoke that is scattered abroad by the wind, and as the remembrance of a guest of one day that passeth by. But the just shall live for evermore, and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a kingdom of glory, and a crown of beauty at the hand of the Lord; for with His right hand He shall cover them, and with His holy arm He will defend them. And His zeal will take armour, and He will arm the creature for the revenge of His enemies. He will put on justice as a breast-plate, and will take true judgment

instead of a helmet: He will take equity for an invincible shield, and He will sharpen His severe wrath for a spear, and the whole world shall fight with Him against the unwise. The shafts of lightning shall go directly from the clouds, as from a bow well bent; they shall be shot out and shall fly to the mark; and thick hail shall be cast upon them from the stone-casting wrath; the waters of the sea shall rage against them, and the rivers shall run together in a terrible manner. A mighty wind shall stand up against them, and as a whirlwind shall divide them; and their iniquity shall bring all the earth to a desert, and wickedness shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty," Wis. iv. 7, and ver. 1. Wherefore let us all hear together the conclusion of the discourse: "FEAR GOD, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, for this is all man; and all things that are done God will bring into judgment," Eccles. xii. 13.

END OF THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN.

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